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DRAGON®

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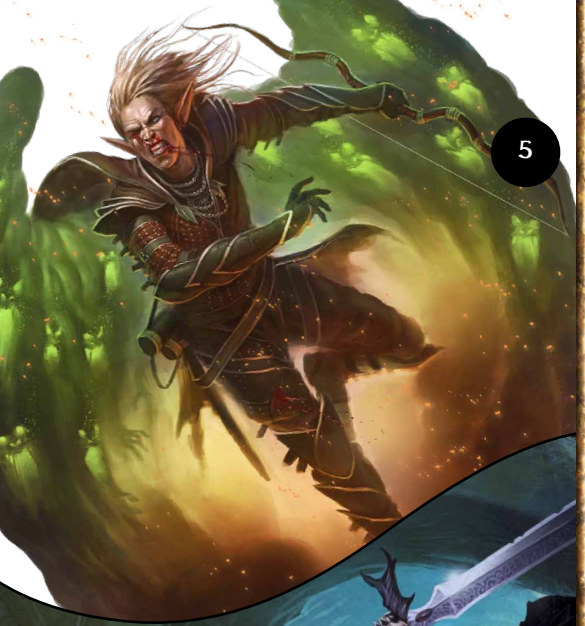

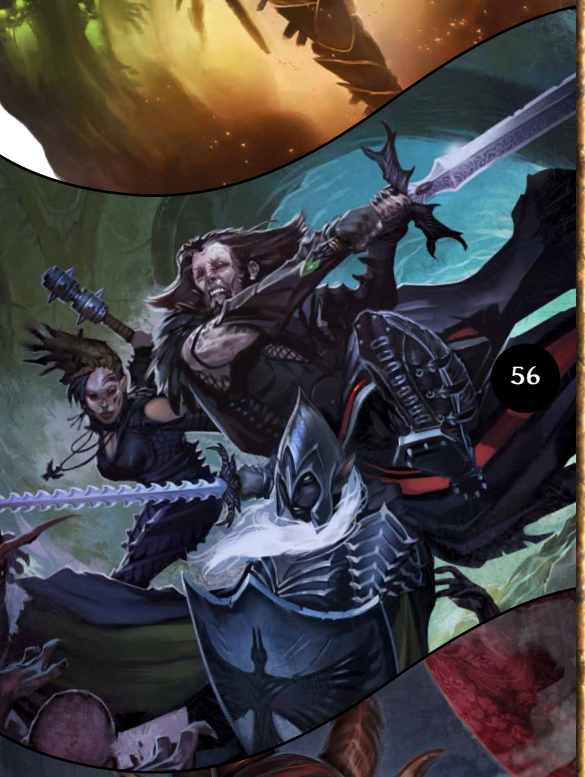

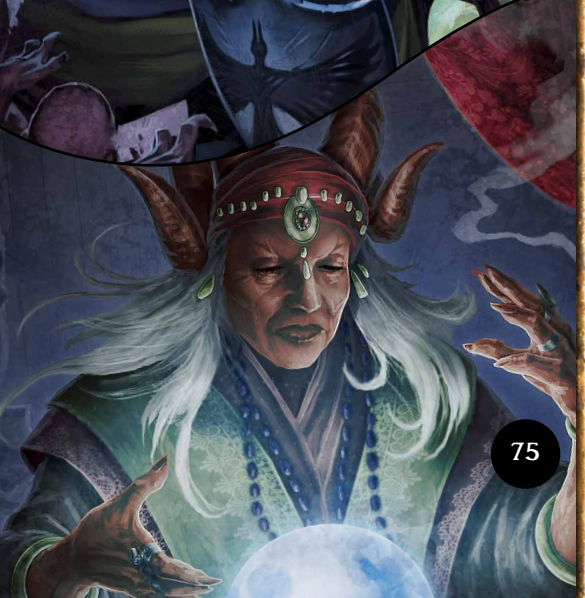

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What You're Looking For

It's another big month here at Wizards of the Coast, especially for Dungeons & Dragons. Since we didn't feel we'd shaken things up enough—or given ourselves enough to do—we went ahead and launched a new D&D website. We hope you're as happy with this new site as we are. It's been a labor of love for well over a year now, and we think it shows the hard work of everyone involved. We also think that users, both new and old, will have a better experience on the site, and that it's never been easier to find the content you're looking for.

But wait, there's more!

As you may have noticed, since we pushed all of our DM support into *Dungeon* magazine, Wednesdays are looking pretty crowded on the content calendar. We were pretty sure this would be a side effect of the change, but building out the October calendar really cemented this in our minds.

In addition, we've come to recognize that player content in *Dragon* magazine has grown, well, plump. Our features are routinely hitting ten pages and up, and this makes for a lengthy online reading experience. Plus, it means that we're spending more words on fewer topics. As a result, we're making one more significant change to how we're approaching *D&D Insider* content.

Starting in November, we're moving to a five-day-a-week content schedule. You might have seen this writing on the wall, considering our new content calendar features five days in a week rather than three like the old calendar.

The biggest change (other than two extra days of new content) is that we're moving away from extra-long feature articles. We're still intending to do several longer features each month, but they'll be about half the length of our longest features to date. The rest of the month, we're going to bring you a series of shorter, 2- or 3-page articles focused around a single concept, and typically tied together with new mechanics. You'll see many more Class Acts articles in this new scheme, as well as articles focused around races (*Winning Races*), faiths (*Channel Divinity* articles), roles (*Know Your Role*), and power source (*Power Play*), among others.

Why these shorter, more frequent articles? We've looked at articles our subscribers are downloading the most, and this is the direction the data is guiding us. The major reason, however, is that we know bigger articles often mean that a given issue doesn't have something for every player. We're aiming to change that. If your class isn't represented one month, then your race, power source, role, or another element of your character should be. If it still isn't, then let us know.

Dragon has long attempted to be as inclusive of every player as possible in a given month. Now we're taking steps to fully realize that vision, starting in November. Stay tuned for next month's content calendar, which will be hitting the site later this month.

Debut Content
Player's Handbook 3

The Seeker

Mechanical Design by Robert J. Schwalb

Commentary by Robert J. Schwalb, and Stephen Radney–MacFarland

illustrations by David Rapoza

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"I am the lightning strike, the earth's upheaval, the unruly sea. I am the bringer of your destruction."

CLASS TRAITS

Role: Controller. You are a primal hunter who forges bonds with mysterious spirits to gain their aid in bringing down your prey. Depending on your choice of class features, you lean toward either defender or striker as a secondary role.

Power Source: Primal. Through ancient ceremonies and whispered evocations, you call on primal spirits to lend their might to your cause.
Key Abilities: Wisdom, Strength, Dexterity

Armor Proficiencies: Cloth, leather
Weapon Proficiencies: Simple melee, simple ranged, military ranged
Bonus to Defense: +1 Reflex, +1 Will

Hit Points at 1st Level: 12 + Constitution score
Hit Points per Level Gained: 5
Healing Surges per Day: 7 + Constitution modifier

Trained Skills: Nature. From the class skills list below, choose three more trained skills at 1st level.

Class Skills: Acrobatics (Dex), Athletics (Str), Endurance (Con), Heal (Wis), Insight (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Nature (Wis), Perception (Wis), Stealth (Dex)

Class Features: Inevitable shot, Seeker's Bond

Seekers are primal champions who scour the wilderness in search of those who would defile it. Versed in hunting techniques handed down through the generations, seekers combine thrown weapon and bow techniques with primal evocations. The combination allows seekers great range in which to deliver deadly attacks that confound and hamper their enemies.

COMMENTARY

Robert J. Schwalb: For the *Player's Handbook 3*, we wanted to expand the family of primal classes to include a new controller. I pitched several options, laying out routes we could go. We ultimately decided the most distinctive an interesting concept was a weapon-wielding controller, something we hadn't tried before. The seeker would imbue his or her ammunition with primal energies and then rain them on her foes at a distance. By putting a weapon in the seekers hand and focusing on ranged attacks allowed the class to stake out its own territory without trampling on the druid.

Stephen Radney-MacFarland: Since the early development of 4th edition, some of us in RPG R&D have pondered what a weapon-using or even a martial controller would look like. While a number of ideas have found voice within and without the development and design pits, none gained traction until the seeker. The primal power source and the mythic hunter theme were the hooks we needed to make this idea sing.

SRM: The first time I read this section, I got an image of a seeker, barbarian, warden, and shaman—a complete primal party—stumbling out of the wilderness, focused on the threat in the distance: a walled city. I wanted to run (or play in) a campaign where a city was the dungeon for a group primal users.

RJS: Seekers use ranged attacks and burst attacks within their weapon's range. Bow-wielding seekers can outstrip other controllers in distance while usually focusing their attacks against a single opponent at a time. Many powers apply control conditions on enemies adjacent to the seeker's targets, thus echoing the more traditional area attack powers possessed by other controllers such as the wizard and invoker.

When a seeker looses a missile, the primal spirits bound to it through ancient evocations are freed, sometimes as terrifying beasts and sometimes as nature's raw destructive potential.

As a seeker, you are both a hunter and a mystic. You attune yourself to the wilderness you call your home, but you are equally tied to the spirits that dwell in the world around you. With your people's traditions and whispered advice from the spirits, you navigate the wilds with ease, at home as any beast. If an enemy appears, you have nothing to fear, both because you have mastered your weapons and because the spirits to whom you have bound yourself add their savage might to your attacks. Whether you use lightning strikes, grasping vines, or spectral beasts, your enemies cannot stand against your assault.

Seeker Class Features

Seekers have the following class features.

Inevitable Shot

You gain the *inevitable shot* power. You can use this power to call on spirits to send your projectile hurling toward another enemy when you miss with a ranged attack.

Seeker's Bond

Seekers develop special bonds with primal spirits by offering solemn vows to further the spirits' purposes. In exchange for these vows, the spirits bestow a measure of their strength to aid their champions' cause.

One of the Seeker's Bond options is presented here. It provides bonuses to certain seeker powers, as detailed in those powers.

Bloodbond: You gain the *encaging spirits* power. In addition, while you are not wearing heavy armor, you can shift as a minor action.

Seeker Overview

Characteristics: Your arrows or thrown weapons loose primal power when used. They might manifest as primal spirits hungering for revenge or as icy winds or crackling lightning. Your powers control your enemies, interfering with their movement, holding them in place, or injuring them for their actions. Also, your attacks might call forth spirits to worry your enemies and pursue them across the battlefield.

Religion: Like other primal characters, seekers view the world's primal spirits as kindred and partners, and they venerate them more than they worship the gods. Seekers who do follow deities commonly worship Melora for her dominion over the forces of nature, Corellon (who is sometimes depicted as the founder of archery), Kord, or Sehanine. Evil seekers sometimes follow Gruumsh or Zehir.

Races: Elves and shifters are the most common seekers, since both their natural inclinations toward primal paths and their inherent abilities make them well matched with the capabilities of the class. Goliaths who favor ranged combat sometimes become seekers (preferring thrown weapons over bows or crossbows), and wilden seekers are also fairly common.

Creating a Seeker

All seekers depend on Wisdom to commune with the spirits to guide them and aid in their attacks. Seekers bind themselves with spirits through their Seeker's Bond. The Bloodbond and Spiritbond are the most common, and your choice corresponds with one of two seeker builds. Regardless of your particular bond, however, you can choose whatever powers best help you to keep your vow.

COMMENTARY

RJS: The Bloodbond class feature establishes the seeker as a secondary striker. I envisioned this seeker style as mobile artillery, always moving, always adjusting to the battelfield's developments, and then hitting enemies from the direction they least expect.

SRM: The blood bond is tailor made for bow-using seekers. Both the encaging spirit power and the shifty part of the class feature are there to make sure the seeker can keep the arrows flying. It's also a nod to those players who've had kobold envy ever since those first encounter in *Keep on the Shadowfell*

RJS: Before the seeker, the longbow was most often found in the archer ranger's hands. Sure, other classes could use them, but a longbow in a barbarian's hands is as worthwhile as a wand in a fighter's. While this feels right for the ranger, the longbow's absence in the game for other characters as a favored weapon is conspicuous. The seeker expands utility for the longbow (and associated weapons) without diminishing the ranger as the preeminent archer. Instead, they can now share this title, each putting a different spin on this weapon.

Vengeful Seeker

You have witnessed nature's destruction and its plunder by cruel and careless mortals. No longer will you wait; vengeance demands blood. A blood oath sees you hunting down and destroying the world's enemies, and those who despoil it will find no mercy from you. Wisdom is your most important ability, followed by Dexterity to help keep you one step ahead of your enemies and avoid their attacks. You lean toward striker as a secondary role.

Suggested Class Feature: Bloodbond
Suggested Feat: Improved Initiative
Suggested Skills: Acrobatics, Athletics, Nature, Stealth
Suggested At-Will Powers: *elemental spirits, stinging swarm*
Suggested Encounter Power: *flickering arrow*
Suggested Daily Power: *storm of spirit shards*

Seeker Powers

Your powers are evocations gained from the bonds you forge with primal spirits. Unlike most other controllers, you use weapons to direct your spirit allies and their destructive wrath, launching arrows or throwing other ranged weapons into your enemies' midst, only to watch your weapons explode in scorching lightning or booming thunder. Your attacks can also herald the appearance of the spirits themselves, calling them forth to assail your enemies.

Class Features

Each seeker has the *inevitable shot* power. You also gain a power from Bloodbond, your Seeker's Bond: *encaging spirits*.

Encaging Spirits — **Seeker Feature**

You call on protecting spirits to harry your foes.

Encounter ✦ Primal
Minor Action **Close** burst 1
Level 11: Close burst 2
Level 21: Close burst 3
Target: Each enemy in burst
Effect: You push each target 1 square, and each target is slowed until the end of your next turn.

Inevitable Shot — Seeker Feature

Even as your target ducks under your shot, the projectile moves on its own to find another enemy.

Encounter ✦ Primal
Free Action **Personal**
Trigger: You miss a creature with a ranged attack
Effect: You make a ranged basic attack against an enemy within 5 squares of the creature you missed, using that creature's space as the attack's origin square.
Special: You regain the use of this power when you spend an action point.

Level 1 At-Will Evocations

Elemental Spirits — Seeker Attack 1

Whether taking the form of blazing flame, crackling ice, sizzling lightning, or thunderous storm, elemental spirits shoot forth to do your enemy harm.

At-Will ✦ Primal, Weapon; Varies
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Special: Choose cold, fire, lightning, or thunder whenever you use this power. Your choice determines the power's damage type.
Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Wisdom modifier damage of the chosen type. Until the end of your next turn, any creature that starts its turn adjacent to the target takes damage of the chosen type equal to your Dexterity modifier.
Level 21: 2[W] + Wisdom modifier damage of the chosen type.

COMMENTARY

RJS: A distinctive class feature goes a long way toward making a class pop. Inevitable shot is a subtle, but very important game element. By the numbers, it gives you a chance to deal damage on a missed encounter attack power. For story, it reinforces the notion that the seeker is binding primal spirits in his weapon and suggests they are not about to let the enemy go unpunished. I can totally see an arrow sprouting wings and punching through a nearby foe hiding behind a rock.

SRM: Inevitable shot is not only useful in making sure you're getting that nice controller damage output even when the dice run a tad cold, it's also fun as hell. During playtests, I loved nailing sneaky enemies hiding around corners or behind barriers. We also added a family of seeker powers that could be used as basic melee attacks (including the stinging swarm at-will power) to gain some extra effects, and allow you to retain accuracy without having to split your ability scores.

SRM: The seeker has a fair number of zones and effects triggering when an enemy ends its turn in an area. This allows the seeker to play well with other controllers and defenders, and let us increase some of the upfront damage of many powers, since often it's the target's choice whether or not they'll take that damage.

Stinging Swarm — Seeker Attack 1

Stinging spirit insects swarm around your enemy.

At-Will ✦ Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Wisdom modifier damage, and the target and each enemy adjacent to it take a -2 penalty to attack rolls until the start of your next turn.
Level 21: 2[W] + Wisdom modifier damage.
Special: You can use this power as a ranged basic attack.

Thorn Cloud Shot — Seeker Attack 1

Thorn-covered vines sprout up from the ground around the enemy you strike.

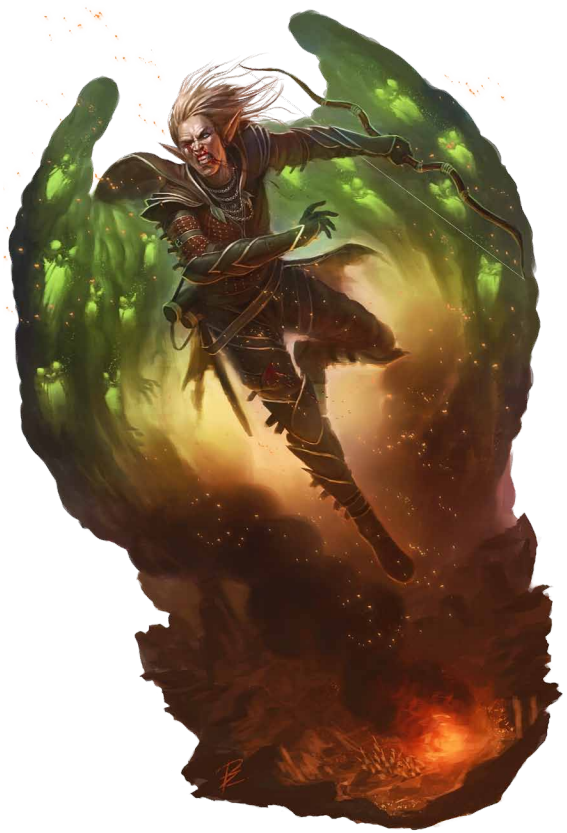
At-Will ✦ Poison, Primal, Weapon, Zone
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Wisdom modifier damage. The attack creates a zone in a burst 1 centered on the target. The zone lasts until the start of your next turn. Any creature that ends its turn within the zone takes poison damage equal to your Wisdom modifier.
Level 21: 2[W] + Wisdom modifier damage.

Level 1 Encounter Evocations

Flickering Arrow — Seeker Attack 1

With a flash, primal motes of light illuminate your target and dazzle those nearby.

Encounter ✦ Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + 1d6 + Wisdom modifier damage. Until the end of your next turn, the target can't benefit from cover, concealment, or total concealment, and enemies take a -2 penalty to attack rolls while within 2 squares of the target.
Bloodbond: Enemies take the penalty while within a number squares of the target equal to 2 + your Dexterity modifier.



Spider Spirits — Seeker Attack 1

The spider spirit sends forth its children to harry your foes.

Encounter ✦ Poison, Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + 1d8 + Wisdom modifier poison damage, and the target is slowed and takes a -2 penalty to all defenses until the end of your next turn.

Level 1 Daily Evocations

Fungal Blooms — Seeker Attack 1

When your projectile strikes your foe, the air fills with spores that create quivering puffballs where they land.

Daily ✦ Conjuration, Poison, Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Primary Target: One creature
Primary Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Wisdom modifier damage, and the primary target is immobilized (save ends).
Effect: You conjure four fungal blooms in four different squares adjacent to the primary target. A fungal bloom can make the following secondary attack, using the fungal bloom's square as the origin square. Once a fungal bloom attacks, it disappears. It otherwise lasts until the end of the encounter.
Opportunity Action **Close** burst 1
Trigger: An enemy enters the fungal bloom's square
Secondary Target: Each enemy in burst
Secondary Attack: Wisdom vs. Fortitude
Hit: Wisdom modifier poison damage.

Storm of Spirit Shards — Seeker Attack 1

Your projectile becomes a burst of spirit shards, which rain down on your foes.

Daily ✦ Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Area** burst 1 within weapon range
Target: Each enemy in burst
Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + 2d6 + Wisdom modifier damage.
Miss: Half damage.

Commentary

RJS: I'll confess, I designed a spell for 3rd edition for the *Player's Handbook 2* that did something similar to this evocation. It did not make the cut then, but I'm delighted to see that it lives again, this time in print! The point of this power and other powers like it is to give players a bit of environmental control over the battlefield. I think it's pretty sexy when a player can create a terrain feature for the enemies to enjoy. Many fights present features that hinder or damage PCs, so giving this kind of tool opens up new tactical choices on the battlefield.

Level 2 Utility Evocations

Hunter's Instinct — Seeker Utility 2

In the middle of battle, you know where to strike and make it hurt the most.

Daily ✦ Primal, Stance
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: Until the stance ends, when you make a ranged weapon attack against any creature within 2 squares of you, you can score a critical hit on a roll of 19-20.

Stag's Grace — Seeker Utility 2

With spirit-granted grace, you move and attack in a way that prevents your foe from taking advantage of your attention being elsewhere.

Encounter ✦ Primal
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: Choose one enemy you can see. Until the end of your next turn, you do not provoke opportunity attacks from that enemy.

Level 3 Encounter Evocations

Escaping Shot — Seeker Attack 3

Brandishing your weapon, you call forth spirits to stupefy your enemy.

Encounter ✦ Primal, Psychic, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Will
Hit: 1[W] + Wisdom modifier psychic damage, and the target is dazed until the end of your next turn.
Effect: You shift 1 square.
Bloodbond: The number of squares you shift equals your Dexterity modifier.
Special: Making this attack doesn't provoke an opportunity attack from the target.

Winter Spirit — Seeker Attack 3

Winter spirits swirl and dance in eddies of snow that appear where your attack falls.

Encounter ✦ Cold, Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Fortitude
Hit: 1[W] + Wisdom modifier cold damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of its next turn.
Special: You can use this power as a ranged basic attack.

COMMENTARY

RJS: This power is a good example of how seekers control the battlefield. Regardless of whether the primary attack hits or misses, enemies have to contend with the primal spirits unleashed around the target..

Level 5 Daily Evocations

Corralling Shot — Seeker Attack 5

Your projectile divides midflight into three barbs, which thrust two foes toward a third.

Daily✦ Primal, Reliable, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Primary Target: One creature
Primary Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Wisdom modifier damage.
Effect: Make a secondary attack.
Secondary Target: One or two creatures that are within 5 squares of the primary target
Secondary Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] damage, and you slide the secondary target 5 squares to a square adjacent to the primary target.

Ensnaring Shot — Seeker Attack 5

Just before your shot strikes your foe, the projectile explodes into tiny, burrowing seeds that grow into binding vines.

Daily ✦ Primal, Weapon, Zone
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Primary Target: One creature
Primary Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 1[W] + Wisdom modifier damage, and the primary target is restrained (save ends).
Effect: The attack creates a zone of difficult terrain in a burst 1 centered on the primary target. The zone lasts until the end of your next turn. Until the zone ends, you can make the following secondary attack, using a square within the zone as the origin square.
Opportunity Action **Close** burst 1
Trigger: An enemy enters the zone or starts its turn there
Secondary Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Secondary Target: The triggering enemy in burst
Hit: The secondary target is immobilized (save ends).
Sustain Minor: The zone persists.

Level 6 Utility Evocations

Blurring Stride — Seeker Utility 6

When you move across the battlefield, you become less and less distinct.

Daily ✦ Illusion, Primal
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: You assume a blurry form until the end of your next turn. Until this form ends, if you end a move action at least 3 squares from where you started, you gain concealment until the end of your next turn.
Sustain Minor: The form persists.

Earthbond Gift — Seeker Utility 6

When at your weakest, you draw renewing strength from the land.

Encounter ✦ Primal
Minor Action **Personal**
Requirement: You must be bloodied or weakened.
Effect: You gain temporary hit points equal to twice your Wisdom modifier. If you are weakened, you can make a saving throw, and if you save, the condition ends on you.

Level 7 Encounter Evocations

Thunder Spirit — Seeker Attack 7

A distant rumble sounds, portending what will happen when your missile finds its mark.

Encounter ✦ Primal, Thunder, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Wisdom modifier thunder damage, and the target falls prone and is deafened until the end of your next turn.
Bloodbond: Each enemy adjacent to the target takes thunder damage equal to your Dexterity modifier and is deafened until the end of your next turn.

Wasp Sting Shot — Seeker Attack 7

Vicious wasps fill the air around your enemy, adding their stingers to your weapon's bite.

Encounter ✦ Poison, Primal, Weapon, Zone
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + 1d6 + Wisdom modifier poison damage. The attack creates a zone in a burst 1 centered on the target. The zone lasts until the end of your next turn. Any enemy that enters the zone or starts its turn there takes poison damage equal to your Wisdom modifier.
Special: You can use this power as a ranged basic attack.

Level 9 Daily Evocations

Binding Shot — Seeker Attack 9

Two shots leap toward your foes, and when the shots strike, tendrils spread out to bind the foes together.

Daily ✦ Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: Two creatures within 5 squares of each other
Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + 1d8 + Wisdom modifier damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: If both attacks hit, you slide one of the targets 5 squares to a square adjacent to the other target, and each target is bound by vines (save ends). Until this effect ends on a target, that target can't move by any means to a square that isn't adjacent to the other target. When a target makes a saving throw against this effect, the target can take 10 damage to gain a +5 bonus to the saving throw.

Commentary

SRM: Many of the seeker's powers have both weapon damage and dice damage. Early incarnation of the seeker used weapons as implements (much like the swordmage), but in development we decided to go with a weapon-only route. We tried expressing the damage only in weapon dice, but found it lacked some numbers nuance and flavor that we wanted seeker powers to have. A mix of weapon damage and flat damage allowed us to not only illustrate what the power was doing more clearly in some powers, but also gave us more room in scaling damage and balancing effects.

HOST OF SPARROWS
RJS: I've been experimenting with this idea for a while, so this is perhaps one of my favorite powers. There's something about doing the Voltron and splitting into lots of different pieces only to reform some distance away.

SRM: Though not nearly metal enough for my tastes, I just love what the hosts of sparrows power does and how it does it. It's one of those powers that when the first time it goes off and you describe its effect, everyone at the table just whispers, "wow." When my seeker uses it, I'm going to reflavor it to host of bats. Now that's metal!

Squall Spirit — Seeker Attack 9

Spawned from raging spring storms, the squall spirits strike your foes with primal fury.

Daily ✦ Lightning, Primal, Thunder, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Fortitude
Hit: 1[W] + 2d8 + Wisdom modifier lightning damage, and each enemy adjacent to the target takes 5 thunder damage.
Miss: Half damage.

Level 10 Utility Evocations

Host of Sparrows — Seeker Utility 10

As you are hurt, you dissipate into a host of sparrows, flying to re-form farther away.

Daily ✦ Polymorph, Primal
Immediate Reaction **Personal**
Trigger: You are damaged by an attack
Effect: You assume the form of a cloud of flying sparrows until the start of your next turn, and you fly your speed without provoking opportunity attacks. While in this form, you are insubstantial, you can't attack, and you can't pick up or manipulate objects. If you are still airborne at the start of your turn, you land without taking falling damage.

Sheltering Underbrush — Seeker Utility 10

Vines and undergrowth burst forth to shelter you.

Daily ✦ Primal, Zone
Minor Action **Close** burst 2
Effect: The burst creates a zone that lasts until the end of your next turn. You and your allies have cover while within the zone, and the zone is difficult terrain for your enemies.
Sustain Minor: The zone persists.

Level 13 Encounter Evocations

Raven Wing Shot — Seeker Attack 13

Avian shadows swirl and flutter about your prey, their talons leaving bloody rents.

Encounter ✦ Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + 1d8 + Wisdom modifier damage. If the target doesn't end its next turn at least 2 squares away from its starting position, it takes 1d8 damage.
Special: You can use this power as a ranged basic attack.

Swarming Spirits — Seeker Attack 13

Angry bees follow your missile, swarming around your enemy until it cannot see and pestering other enemies nearby.

Encounter ✦ Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Wisdom modifier damage. Until the end of your next turn, the target is blinded, and enemies take a –2 penalty to attack rolls while within 2 squares of the target.
Bloodbond: Enemies take the penalty while within a number squares of the target equal to 2 + your Dexterity modifier.

Level 15 Daily Evocations

Corrosive Slime — Seeker Attack 15

Your missile slams into the foe, causing its skin to bubble. Corrosive ropes of slime then burst from it and burn your other enemies.

Daily ✦ Acid, Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Wisdom modifier acid damage, and the target and each enemy adjacent to it take ongoing 10 acid damage (save ends).
Miss: Half damage, and each enemy adjacent to the target takes 5 acid damage.
Effect: Any creature reduced to 0 hit points by this power dissolves into a puddle of corrosive slime that fills the creature's space. Until the end of the encounter, any creature that enters that space or starts its turn there takes 5 acid damage.

Wave of Sleep — Seeker Attack 15

Your projectile dissolves into a blast of sand that lodges in your opponents' eyes, causing unendurable fatigue.

Daily ✦ Primal, Sleep, Weapon
Standard Action **Area** burst 2 within weapon range
Target: Each enemy in burst
Attack: Wisdom vs. Fortitude
Hit: The target is dazed (save ends).
First Failed Saving Throw: The target is unconscious instead of dazed (save ends).
Miss: The target is dazed (save ends).

Level 16 Utility Evocations

Bramble Hide — Seeker Utility 16

Thorny vines emerge from your skin, promising pain to any who try to harm you.

Encounter ✦ Primal
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: Until the end of your next turn, you gain a +2 bonus to AC, and any creature that hits you with a melee attack takes 10 + your Wisdom modifier damage.

Sure Sight — Seeker Utility 16

Your missiles shine with emerald light, and no earthly force can block your sight.

Daily ✦ Primal
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, you gain darkvision, ignore concealment and total concealment, and are immune to the blinded condition.

Level 17 Encounter Evocations

Flesh-Tether Shot — Seeker Attack 17

The missile punches through your enemy, dragging some of its viscera with it as it slams into the ground. It can move, but it's going to hurt.

Encounter ✦ Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Wisdom modifier damage. If the target moves before the end of your next turn, it takes 5 damage and is dazed until the end of its next turn.
Bloodbond: The target also grants combat advantage until the end of your next turn.

Sprite Dance — Seeker Attack 17

Cunning sprites emerge from the Feywild to dance with your enemies and draw them into danger across the battlefield.

Encounter ✦ Primal, Teleportation, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Wisdom modifier damage, and you teleport the target 5 squares. One ally adjacent to the destination space can then make a melee basic attack against the target as an immediate reaction.

COMMENTARY

SRM: Sure sight may be the ultimate archer utility power. If William Tell could pick a seeker power, I'm pretty sure it would be this one.

Level 19 Daily Evocations

Avenging Spirits — Seeker Attack 19

A well-placed shot calls forth primal spirits that carry your enemy's pain to your other enemies.

Daily ✦ Conjuration, Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Primary Target: One creature
Primary Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + 2d8 + Wisdom modifier damage.
Effect: You conjure four avenging spirits in four different squares adjacent to the primary target. Each spirit can make the following secondary attack, using the spirit's square as the origin square. Once a spirit attacks, it disappears. It otherwise lasts until the end of the encounter.
Opportunity Action **Close** burst 1
Trigger: An enemy enters the spirit's square
Secondary Target: Each enemy in burst
Secondary Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 5 + Wisdom modifier damage.

Captivating Missile — Seeker Attack 19

When your missile strikes, blue and green light plays across your foe briefly as you establish control over its mind.

Daily ✦ Charm, Primal, Reliable, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + Wisdom modifier damage, and the target is dominated (save ends).
Special: You can use this power as a ranged basic attack.

COMMENTARY

SRM: *Avenging sprits* is part of a string of powers that places conjurations on the battlefield adjacent to the primary target. These conjurations in turn attack creatures that enter their space. Combine these with the powers with those that punish enemies for ending their turn in an area, and you can that a good many of the seeker's control power keep enemies pinned down and hedge in.

Level 22 Utility Evocations

Nature's Passage — Seeker Utility 22

For a time, you walk partly in the world and partly in the realm of the spirits.

Daily ✦ Primal, Stance
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: Until the stance ends, you are phasing.

Spirit Guide — Seeker Utility 22

Spirits guide your aim, helping you strike a distant foe.

Encounter ✦ Primal
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: You gain a +5 power bonus to the next ranged attack roll you make before the end of your turn.

Level 23 Encounter Evocations

Agonizing Shot — Seeker Attack 23

You strike your foe in a sensitive spot, and if the foe retreats, the wound becomes more painful.

Encounter ✦ Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + 2d6 + Wisdom modifier damage. Until the end of your next turn, the target takes 5 damage whenever it moves on its turn or uses an attack power.
Bloodbond: Add your Dexterity modifier to the damage the target takes whenever it moves on its turn or uses an attack power.

Quill Storm — Seeker Attack 23

When your projectile hits your enemy, long quills tear from it and fly outward.

Encounter ✦ Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Primary Target: One creature
Primary Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 1[W] + 2d8 + Wisdom modifier damage. Make a secondary attack that is an area burst 3 centered on the primary target.
Secondary Target: Each creature in burst other than the primary target
Secondary Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 1d8 damage, and the secondary target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends).

Level 25 Daily Evocations

Bloody Sirocco — Seeker Attack 25

A fetid wind carries your missile into the heart of your foes and delivers a sickening stench.

Daily ✦ Poison, Primal, Weapon, Zone
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + 2d8 + Wisdom modifier damage, and the target and each enemy adjacent to it are dazed (save ends).
Effect: The attack creates a zone in a burst 1 centered on the target. The zone lasts until you dismiss it as a minor action or until the end of the encounter. Any creature that ends its turn within the zone takes 10 poison damage. As a move action, you can move the zone 4 squares.

Lightning Burst — Seeker Attack 25

At your command, tiny sparks grow into humanoid shapes formed from lightning that dance and scorch your enemies.

Daily ✦ Lightning, Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Primary Target: One or two creatures
Primary Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Wisdom modifier lightning damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Make a secondary attack for each primary target. Each attack is an area burst 1 centered on a different primary target.
Secondary Target: Each creature in burst other than the primary targets
Secondary Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 1d10 + Wisdom modifier lightning damage.

Level 27 Encounter Evocations

Devouring Arrow — Seeker Attack 27

Your projectile rots as it flies toward your foe, until nothing but horrid maggots remain to feast on the foe.

Encounter ✦ Necrotic, Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Fortitude
Hit: 2[W] + Wisdom modifier necrotic damage, and the target and each creature adjacent to it are weakened until the end of your next turn.
Special: You can use this power as a ranged basic attack.

Razor Hail — Seeker Attack 27

Your projectile splinters into a cloud of razor-sharp icicles that rip flesh and then melt away in a crimson flood.

Encounter ✦ Cold, Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Area** burst 2 within weapon range
Target: Each creature in burst
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 2[W] + Wisdom modifier cold damage. If the target moves more than half its speed on its next turn, it falls prone at the end of that turn.
Bloodbond: If the target moves at all on its next turn, it grants combat advantage until the end of your next turn.

Level 29 Daily Evocations

Baleful Shot — Seeker Attack 29

The foe you strike with your projectile warps and twists excruciatingly, the sight of which rattles your enemies.

Daily ✦ Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + 2d8 + Wisdom modifier damage, and the target is stunned (save ends).
Miss: Half damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).
Effect: Any enemy that can see the target and isn't immune to fear takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls until the start of your next turn.

Uttercold — Seeker Attack 29

Heat flees the target of your attack, freezing the target solid.

Daily ✦ Cold, Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + 2d8 + Wisdom modifier cold damage, and the target is restrained and gains vulnerable 10 to all damage (save ends both). In addition, any enemy that starts its turn adjacent to the target takes 5 cold damage and is slowed until the start of its next turn.
Miss: Half damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).

Paragon Paths

Crimson Hunter

"There is nowhere to hide, prey, for your blood stinks of your fear."

Prerequisite: Seeker

The spirits demand recompense for crimes committed against the natural world, and they accept payment only in blood. You are their collector. You range the land to exact the price your enemies must pay for violating the world. You are a relentless hunter, ruthless in your mien, and efficient in your methods.

The spirits aid you in your efforts by imparting to you the ancient hunting methods of your people. Though your ancestors used these techniques to bring down game, you find them equally effective in eliminating your foes. Each time an enemy falls, you reaffirm your bond to your spirit guides, offering the fallen enemy as a sacrifice to slake their thirst until you next come upon a deserving foe.

As a crimson hunter, you focus on the striker elements found in many seeker evocations. The smell of blood provokes you, letting you move more quickly to engage your enemies. These techniques allow you to close the distance to bring an enemy in range or to skirt the battlefield for your next strike.

COMMENTARY

RJS: Comparisons between the seeker and ranger are inevitable and knowing this, it was important to provide mechanical options for players who want a more "woodsy" ranger. This paragon path speaks to the striker secondary role and allows players the option to tailor their fighting style to defeat the enemy, one foe at a time.

SRM: The crimson hunter was purposely developed as a paragon path that both the single class and the multiclass seeker would be happy to take. Its focus on speed and devastating ranged basic attacks will make many archer characters happy, but it works especially well with the seeker's attack power that can be used in place of ranged basic attacks.

Crimson Hunter Path Features

Swift Action (11th level): When you spend an action point to take an extra action, you gain a +1 bonus to speed until the end of the encounter.

Accurate Arrow (11th level): You gain a +1 bonus to the attack rolls of your ranged basic attacks.

Keen Missile (16th level): When you make a ranged basic attack, you can score a critical hit on a roll of 19–20.

Crimson Hunter Evocations

Ravaging Shot — **Crimson Hunter Attack 11**

You draw from your ancestors' insights to guide your shots.

Encounter ✦ Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Wisdom modifier damage, and the target gains vulnerable 5 to all damage until the end of your next turn.
Special: You can use this power as a ranged basic attack.

Hunter's Mobility — **Crimson Hunter Utility 12**

An enemy's momentary weakness gives you the chance to adjust your position.

Encounter ✦ Primal
Immediate Reaction **Personal**
Trigger: An enemy you can see is bloodied by an attack
Effect: You shift half your speed.

Bloody Despair — **Crimson Hunter Attack 20**

Your careful shot nudges the enemy into despair, robbing it of some of its strength.

Daily ✦ Primal, Reliable, Weapon
Standard Action **Ranged** weapon
Target: One bloodied creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Fortitude
Hit: 3[W] + Wisdom modifier damage, and the target is weakened (save ends). The target takes a –5 penalty to saving throws against this effect until the end of its next turn.

Seven Fates Archer

"Go forth, spirits, and make true the portents of my enemies' defeat."

Prerequisite: Seeker

Spirits are everywhere in the world, from haunted forests to windswept mountains. These entities can be nothing more than wild emotions given half-realized form or can possess vast intelligence, with memories stretching back to the world's earliest days. You turn to these spirits to help you protect the world, drawing from their vast and mysterious power to glimpse your enemies' fates and bring about their final ends.

Communing with the land's spirits reveals possible futures, from which you pluck the strands of fate that coincide best with your travels, and you weave those strands into your bowstring. Arrows fired from the bow carry with them the fates your enemies deserve.

This paragon path is one of guardianship. Just as you can harry enemies by loosing spirits at them, so too can you alter the fates of those around you. These techniques help keep your allies from harm, even as you frustrate and confound your foes.

Seven Fates Archer Path Features

Guarding Shot (11th level): Whenever you make a ranged attack, you can take a -2 penalty to the attack roll against one of the targets to grant a +2 bonus to the AC of one ally adjacent to that target. The bonus lasts until the end of your next turn.

Pinning Action (11th level): When you spend an action point to make a ranged basic attack, targets hit by the attack are also immobilized and grant combat advantage until the end of your next turn.

Opportunity Shot (16th level): Whenever you can make an opportunity attack, you can make a ranged basic attack in place of a melee basic attack. Your attack doesn't provoke opportunity attacks.

COMMENTARY

SRM: While crimson hunter leans striker, this paragon path is all about control. If it leans toward any secondary roll, it would be leader. Guardian shot and pinning actions path features, along with intercepting shot all make sure that your allies are taken care of while you're laying down damage and control.

RJS: The seven fates archer injects a bit of defender into your seeker class. While maybe not the first choice for an aggressive controller the vengeful seeker often is, this paragon path allows you to temper your offense with good defense.

Seven Fates Archer Evocations

Spirit Shackles — **Seven Fates Archer Attack 11**

When your projectile hits, primal spirits pull at your target, slowing it down.

Encounter ✦ Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Area** burst 1 within weapon range
Target: Each enemy in burst
Attack: Wisdom vs. Will
Hit: 1[W] + 1d8 + Wisdom modifier damage, and the target is slowed until the end of your next turn.

Intercepting Shot — **Seven Fates Archer Utility 12**

Reacting with instinctive speed, you intercept an enemy's attack.

Encounter ✦ Primal, Weapon
Immediate Interrupt **Ranged** weapon
Trigger: An enemy hits an ally adjacent to you with a ranged attack
Target: The triggering enemy
Effect: Make a ranged basic attack against the target with a -2 penalty to the attack roll. Your attack has no effect on the target, whether it hits or misses. However, if it hits, the ally gains a +5 bonus to all defenses against the triggering enemy's attack, and if that attack still hits, the ally takes only half damage from it.

Wrath of the Spirit World — **Seven Fates Archer Attack 20**

Your missile's impact into the ground calls forth a pack of angry spirits to harry your foes.

Daily ✦ Conjuration, Primal, Weapon
Standard Action **Area** burst 3 within weapon range
Effect: You conjure five angry spirits in five different unoccupied squares in the burst. The spirits occupy their squares, and they last until the end of your next turn. You and your allies can gain cover from the spirits and can move through their squares. While adjacent to any of the spirits, enemies take a -2 penalty to attack rolls. When the spirits appear, each one makes the following melee attack.
Target: One enemy adjacent to the spirit
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 1[W] damage, and the target is knocked prone.

Seeker Feats

Bloodied Elusion

Prerequisite: Seeker, Bloodbond class feature

Benefit: When you are bloodied by any attack, you can shift 1 square as a free action.

Inescapable Shot

Prerequisite: Seeker, *inevitable shot* power

Benefit: When you use your *inevitable shot*, you can make the ranged basic attack against an enemy within 10 squares of the creature you missed, instead of an enemy within 5 squares.

Strengthened Bond

Prerequisite: Seeker, Seeker's Bond class feature

Benefit: The first time you are bloodied during an encounter, you regain the use of your Seeker's Bond power if it is expended.

Bloodbond Wrath

Prerequisite: 11th level, seeker, Bloodbond class feature

Benefit: The targets of your *encaging spirits* power grant combat advantage to you until the end of your next turn.

COMMENTARY

SRM: There are a good number of seeker feats that talk directly to *inevitable shot*. By the time you are epic level, and you are not doing at least some damage with each one of your attacks, the only explanation is that you ignored these feats, or it's time to retire that tired old d20 you're using.

Inevitable Volley

Prerequisite: 11th level, seeker, *inevitable shot* power

Benefit: When you use your *inevitable shot*, you can make two ranged basic attacks instead of one, each against a different target.

Inevitable Accuracy

Prerequisite: 21st level, seeker, *inevitable shot* power

Benefit: When you use your *inevitable shot* and don't hit with it, you regain the use of *inevitable shot*.

about the authors

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Abyssal Genasi

By Peter Schaefer
Illustrations by Emrah Elmasli

The genasi race has many expressions. It is a race of fire, wind, earth, water, and storm. The raw power of the elements coursing through their bodies gives them an affiinity—a control that gives them a racial definition and potent natural abilities in combat.

Genasi bloodlines are not pure, however. A flaw in the heritage of all genasi lingers within them, but its rarity is such that most genasi put it out of their minds. Sometimes, inexplicably, this curse manifests in a genasi child. When this happens, a genasi family—even the entire community, if there is such—must deal with the corruption in some manner. Most such children find themselves feared or reviled, at best. Other times, the marked children are quietly removed from the household, and are left to be reclaimed by the elements. Some mournful parents give the child to distant relations who have less prejudice, often in the Elemental Chaos.

Those who have given the matter of this corruption any thought believe that it is as old as the genasi race. Just as the Abyss sits as a rotting cyst at the heart of the Elemental Chaos, so does the potential for this impurity to manifest in a new child rest within every genasi. This analogy is more than apt: When the genasi were first formed as a balance between the Elemental Chaos and the world, a seed of evil from the Abyss reached forth to create a flaw in the race—one that would last as long as the Pit itself does.

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Or so do those sages who have had a chance to study this corruption believe.

When you make a genasi PC, you can choose one of these corrupt manifestations as a PC's elemental manifestation: causticsoul, cindersoul, plaguesoul, or voidsoul. This corrupt manifestation becomes the character's elemental manifestation. Each is a foul, destructive twist on one of the natural manifestations, and each offers a particular benefit and provides an associated encounter power. Additionally, the PC's appearance changes based on the element he or she manifests.

Causticsoul: You can breathe underwater. You also gain resist 5 acid and the *acid surge* power.

At 11th level, the resistance improves to 10 acid.

At 21st level, the resistance improves to 15 acid.

Cindersoul: You gain a +1 racial bonus to Fortitude, resist 5 fire, and the *firedeath* power.

At 11th level, the resistance improves to 10 fire.

At 21st level, the resistance improves to 15 fire.

Plaguesoul: You gain resist 5 poison, a +5 racial bonus to saving throws against disease, and the *plaguebearer* power.

At 11th level, the resistance improves to 10 poison.

At 21st level, the resistance improves to 15 poison.

Voidsoul: You gain resist 5 psychic, a +1 racial bonus to Will, and the *void assumption* power.

At 11th level, the resistance improves to 10 psychic.

At 21st level, the resistance improves to 15 psychic.

Acid Surge — Causticsoul Genasi Racial Power

You dissolve into a bubbling, hissing liquid and surge through your enemies.

Encounter ✦ Acid
Move Action **Personal**
Effect: You shift half your speed over ground or liquid terrain and through squares occupied by enemies. You must end your movement in an unoccupied square. You make the attack against each creature whose space you enter.
Attack: Strength +3 vs. Reflex, Constitution +3 vs. Reflex, or Dexterity + 3 vs. Reflex
Level 11: The bonus on the attack increases to +6
Level 21: The bonus on the attack increases to +9
Hit: 1d8 + Strength, Constitution, or Dexterity modifier acid damage.
Level 11: 2d8+ Strength, Constitution, or Dexterity modifier acid damage.
Level 21: 3d8+ Strength, Constitution, or Dexterity modifier acid damage.

Firedeath — Cindersoul Genasi Racial Power

As all fires must burn out, so does each attack on you dwindle and die.

Encounter
Immediate Interrupt **Personal**
Trigger: You take damage
Effect: All damage dice rolled for the triggering attack are considered to have a result of 1.

Plaguebearer — Plaguesoul Genasi Racial Power

The breath you exhale is not a bearer of seeds and scents, but a carrier of poison and death.

Encounter ✦ Poison
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: Until the end of your next turn, any creature that starts its turn adjacent to you takes 5 poison damage.
Level 11: 10 poison damage.
Level 21: 15 poison damage.

Void Assumption — Voidsoul Genasi Racial Power

You become the void, the absence of all, for just long enough.

Encounter
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: You cease to exist and can take no actions until the start of your next turn. You have line of sight and line of effect to no creature, and no creature has line of sight or line of effect to you. At the start of your next turn, you reappear in the square of your choice within 3 squares of the square you left.

The physical qualities that genasi display when using different corrupted manifestations are summarized below.

Causticsoul: Green skin; green-black energy lines; bald with green-black energy lines glowing on the head.

Cindersoul: Ashen gray skin; dim fiery-orange energy lines; faint trails of ash or wisps of smoke emanate from the head.

Plaguesoul: Dried blood-colored skin; black energy lines; ruddy shreds on the head as of rust.

Voidsoul: Black skin; energy lines of the deepest lack of color; bald with utter darkness rising from the head.

Playing an Abyssal Genasi

A genasi who exhibits one of these corruptions is twisted by the Abyss. A genasi with a corrupted manifestation might decide that evil and destruction is the reason he or she was born. Many such genasi come to serve a demon lord; Graz'zt in particular employs or influences more Abyssal genasi than others of his kind.

But the chances of birth do not dictate a person's nature. A few of these genasi decide that they will try and bear the taint of the Abyss with honor and dignity. For these, life is harder. Some choose to wield the power they have for good on any front. Others choose to strike directly back at the Abyss.

Abyssal Genasi Adventurers

Three sample genasi adventurers are described below.

Mazad-dai is a causticsoul genasi artificer. After he was left to die of exposure by his parents, travelers found him and took him to a city to show off as an oddity. A collision between the circus cart that was his home and a traveling apothecary's wagon revealed Mazad-dai's inherent resistance to acid and earned him an instant apprenticeship. Today, he is a young but brilliant master of acidic alchemical concoctions and potent magic.

The barbarian Vindt left her family when she was still young. The plaguesoul genasi knew her family's acceptance of her was based on fear of what she would become, and she hated it. Her anger at her genasi community simmered deep within her but came to the surface too easily for her liking, so she found solace living alone in the wilderness. There she learned to channel her rage to fight that which might harm the forest, and she learned during this process that her foes shared qualities with the same force that had tainted her. Now she and a group of like-minded allies campaign to take the fight to those who want to despoil the world for their own profit or joy, and this band intends to carry their credo all the way to the Abyss.

Cindersoul genasi Inda-Iar devoted her life to the Raven Queen when she came of age. As she has matured, her life experiences have given her a sense of the inevitable. When she was granted her paladinhood by the Raven Queen's priests, she swore to see all events to their rightful end—nothing should happen earlier than required. Her flawed sight ceased to bother her because she considers it a gift from her deity to make up for the corruption in her blood.

Manifestation Definitions

The four manifestations described in this article are elemental manifestations, like those presented in the *Forgotten Realms® Player's Guide*. They also represent a subset of genasi elemental manifestations called corrupt manifestations.

A reference to an elemental manifestation can mean any of the five original or four new elemental manifestations. References to corrupt manifestations mean only the causticsoul, cindersoul, plaguesoul, and voidsoul manifestations.

Abyssal Genasi Feats

These feats are connected to genasi with a corrupt manifestation.

Heroic Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of any level who meets the feat's other prerequisites.

Empty Mind

Prerequisite: Genasi, voidsoul elemental manifestation

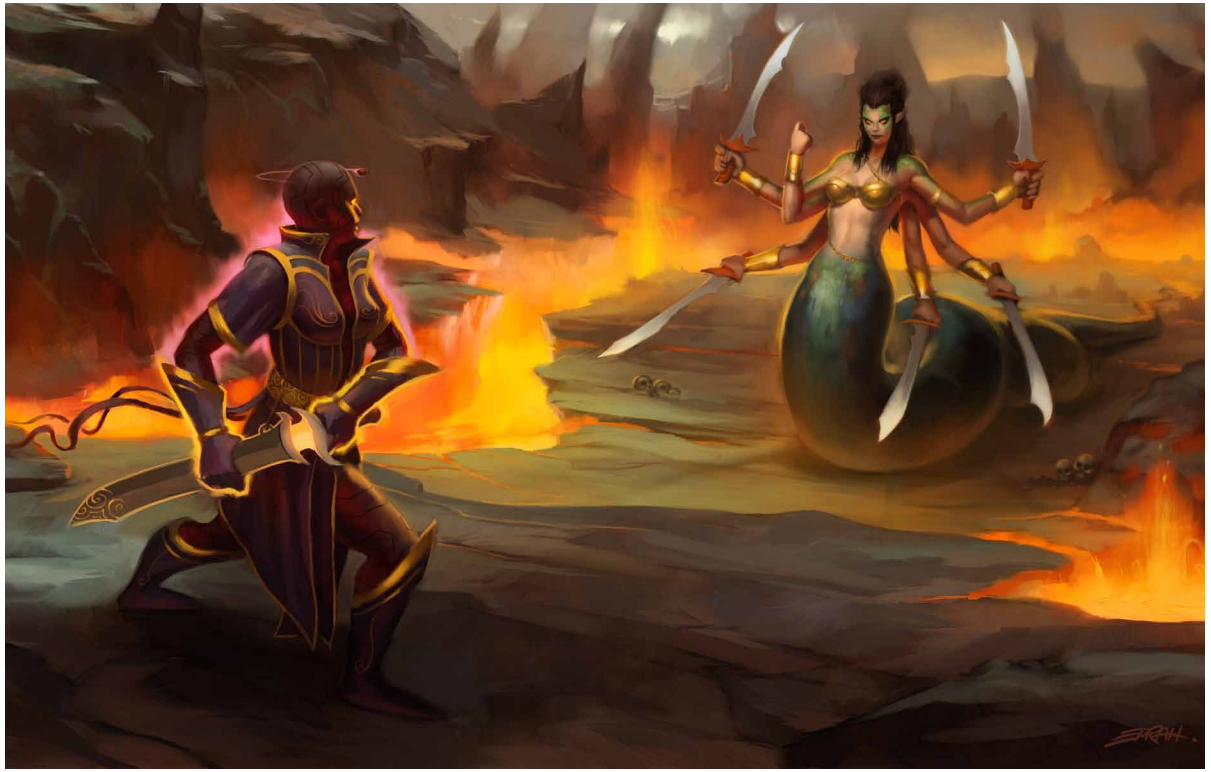
Benefit: When an enemy hits you with an attack that targets your Will or deals psychic damage to you, that enemy takes psychic damage equal to your psychic resistance.

Extra Corrupt Manifestation

Prerequisite: Genasi

Benefit: Select a new genasi elemental manifestation: causticsoul, cindersoul, plaguesoul, or voidsoul. When you take a short rest or an extended rest, you can adopt this new corrupt manifestation instead of the one you had been exhibiting.

Special: You can take this feat multiple times, choosing a new corrupt manifestation each time. When you take a short rest or an extended rest, you can choose to switch between any of the corrupt manifestations you know.



Eyes of Dying Light

Prerequisite: Genasi, cindersoul elemental manifestation

Benefit: You gain darkvision. When using your darkvision, a light as of a dying spark shines in your eyes.

Sense of the Corrupted

Prerequisite: Genasi, any corrupt manifestation

Benefit: You gain a +5 bonus to Perception checks to detect demons and a +5 bonus to Insight checks to see through demons' disguises.

Paragon Tier Feat

The feat in this section is available to a character of 11th level or higher who meets the feat's other prerequisites.

Foul Torrent

Prerequisite: 11th level, genasi, causticsoul elemental manifestation, *acid surge* racial power

Benefit: As part of your *acid surge* racial power, you can shift your speed instead of half your speed.

Enemy of the Abyss

"The Abyss has marked me and made me outcast, giving me in a single act the power and the will to destroy it."

Prerequisite: Genasi, corrupt manifestation

Despite the petty discrimination that Abyssal genasi endure, they make their own way through the world. Some flourish; many falter. A few look beyond the unpleasantness of the world to the true cause of their pain: the Abyss.

You have declared war on the source of your corruption, but you do not deny the power that the Abyss has granted you. Instead, you have decided to seize as much of the Abyss's power as you can grasp, and will turn this power back on its source, wielding it against the forces of the Abyss.

Enemy of the Abyss Features

Abyssal Blood Action (11th level): When you spend an action point to take an extra action and you are bloodied, any enemy within 3 squares of you takes ongoing 5 damage (save ends), and you gain regeneration 5 until no enemy has ongoing damage from this feature.

Steal from the Abyss (11th level): When you use your corrupt manifestation racial power, you gain a +2 bonus to your next attack roll, and each demon within 10 squares of you takes a –2 penalty to its next attack roll.

Abyssal Presence (16th level): You ignore the resistances of demons within 5 squares of you.

Enemy of the Abyss Powers

Abyssal Rend — Enemy of the Abyss Attack 11

Channeling the Abyss's evil, your fingertips tear through your foe's armor and flesh—more so if you can smell its blood.

Encounter
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength or Intelligence + 6 vs. Fortitude
Level 21: Strength or Intelligence + 9 vs. Fortitude
Hit: 3d10 + Strength or Intelligence modifier damage. If the target is bloodied, it takes 1d10 extra damage.

Demonskin Meditation — Enemy of the Abyss Utility 12

You wrap yourself in a sheathe of demon's energy, protecting yourself from a variety of elements.

Daily
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: Choose a damage type: acid, cold, fire, lightning, or thunder. You gain resistance to that damage type equal to one-half your level until the end of the encounter.

Abyssal Command — Enemy of the Abyss Attack 20

As the Abyss stains your bloodline, you corrupt another's body and mind.

Daily ✦ Charm, Reliable
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength or Intelligence + 9 vs. Will
Hit: 2d10 + Strength or Intelligence modifier damage, and the target is dominated (save ends). If the target is a demon, it takes a –2 penalty to saving throws against this effect.
Aftereffect: The target is dazed (save ends).

Scion of Absence

"Think on the time after you die. It is the same world, distinguished only in that you no longer exist. Do you see how you cannot fight an absence, yet it can be responsible for your demise?"

Prerequisite: Genasi, voidsoul elemental manifestation

What is, the void consumes. To attack the void is of the utmost futility, because it has no point of weakness, no vulnerability, and nothing to sever or destroy.

The scion of absence studies and learns from the voidsoul association with the inverted fundament: the lack of all things. Most are philosophic warriors or masters of magic, seeking the nonaction that achieves their goals. Others resemble destructive forces of nature that no one can easily stop.

Scion of Absence Features

Nonbeing Action (11th level): When you spend an action point to take an extra action, you can end one effect you currently have that a save can end. Also, you regain use of your *void assumption* power if you have expended it this encounter.

Touching the Void (11th level): When an enemy misses you with an attack, it takes psychic damage equal to your Strength modifier or your Intelligence modifier.

Void Phase (16th level): You gain a +2 bonus to saving throws.

Scion of Absence Powers

Glimpse of the Void — Scion of Absence Attack 11

Your lightest touch grants the creature the true experience of being without existence.

Encounter
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength or Intelligence + 6 vs. Reflex
Level 21: Strength or Intelligence + 9 vs. Reflex
Hit: The target ceases to exist and can take no actions until the start of your next turn. It has line of sight and line of effect to no creature, and no creature has line of sight or line of effect to it. At the start of your next turn, the target reappears in the space it left, or in the nearest available space if that space is occupied.
Aftereffect: The target grants combat advantage to you and your allies until the end of your next turn.

Wearing the Void — Scion of Absence Utility 12

You are nothing; nothing can pierce you or rend you.

Encounter
Immediate Interrupt **Personal**
Trigger: You take damage
Effect: You reduce the triggering damage to 0.

Voidsoul Infliction — Scion of Absence Attack 20

All creatures that near you feel the fatal pull of utter dissolution.

Daily ✦ Psychic, Stance
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: You assume the voidsoul infliction stance. Until the stance ends, any enemy that starts its turn within 2 squares of you is dazed until the end of your next turn. The enemy can choose to take 10 psychic damage instead of being dazed.

Soul of Erosion

"I am of that which digs and dissolves. I tear away and destroy, and you are next."

Prerequisite: Genasi, causticsoul elemental manifestation, watersoul elemental manifestation

The soul of erosion combines the two most insinuating elements: water and its destructive cousin acid. Those who pursue this path perfect a devastating fighting style that sweeps foes aside even as it sears them.

Some genasi who follow this path consider the union of water with its Abyssal analogue a measured balance of the natural and the unnatural. Others think of it as diluting their corruption with purity, and cruel minds consider it tainting the purity of the watersoul with the bile of the Abyss. All you know is that, whatever anyone else thinks, your abilities get the job done.

Soul of Erosion Features

Erosion Action (11th level): When you spend an action point to take an extra action, you can shift half your speed before or after the action. Each enemy adjacent to you at any point during that move takes 5 acid damage.

Union of Blessed and Cursed Waters (11th level): You manifest both watersoul and causticsoul at the same time when you manifest either one. This feature allows you to use both *swiftcurrent* and *acid surge* in the same encounter.

Flowing Movement (16th level): You are insubstantial while you are moving.

Soul of Erosion Powers

Acid Whirlpool — Soul of Erosion Attack 11

Tainted water flies out from you to strike a foe before you draw it, and your foe, back in to you.

Encounter ✦ Acid
Standard Action **Close** burst 3
Target: Each creature in burst
Attack: Strength or Intelligence + 6 vs. Fortitude
Level 21: Strength or Intelligence + 9 vs. Fortitude
Hit: 2d8 + Strength or Intelligence modifier acid damage, and you pull the target 2 squares.

Causticsoul Skin — Soul of Erosion Utility 12

Your body dissolves into water and acid and clings to your enemy.

Daily ✦ Acid
Move Action **Melee** 1
Target: One creature
Effect: You shift 1 square into the target's space and occupy the same space as the target. While you occupy the target's space, the target takes ongoing 10 acid damage (save ends), you cannot attack the target, and if the target moves, you move with it. You take half damage from melee and ranged attacks, and the target takes the same amount and type of damage (the target ignores this part of the effect). This effect ends when the target succeeds on its saving throw or if you move or are forced to move out of the target's space. If the effect ends while you are in the target's space, you shift to an unoccupied space adjacent to the target.

Corrosive Torrent — Soul of Erosion Attack 20

You create a rushing flow of fluid that makes the eyes water and burns the flesh.

Daily ✦ Acid
Standard Action **Close** blast 5
Target: Each creature in blast
Attack: Strength or Intelligence + 9 vs. Reflex
Hit: 2d6 + Strength or Intelligence modifier acid damage. You push the target 2 squares, and the target takes ongoing 15 acid damage (save ends).
Miss: Half damage, and ongoing 10 acid damage (save ends).

About the Author

Peter Schaefer retired from ruling a small European nation when Wizards of the Coast offered him real money to develop Dungeons & Dragons® full time. Recent developments include *Player's Handbook®* 2 and *Arcane Power™*.

Barbarian Essentials

The Way of Rage

By Rob Heinsoo

Illustrations by Christopher Burdett

"There were five of us initiated that year—five no-longer-children who walked from the Heart Tree at the center of the forest to the peak of Lightningtop, the hidden peak that can be reached only when you walk on the Other Side. Kendrik, Lyssa, and Jal the Badger met our clan spirits on the way. I could see they were relieved. They never wanted the path of heroes. They were happy to deal with the minor problems of the climb and keep the songs going so that none of us would fall or fall asleep before completing the climb.

Of course Sheyn saw more than the others. By the time we reached the mountain she was already muttering to spirits on every side, and I knew that she had been marked as a shaman. Maybe a great shaman. As we turned onto the hidden way to the peak, Sheyn looked back toward me, and I saw the spirit of a hawk leap from her heart, and together the two of them said, 'We will need you at the top, Arkjan.'

I raced ahead of her hand-over-hand, leaping to the top of the cliff before the others. The great beast sliding through the boulders toward me was the Enemy, a stench-thing from outside the world with a buzzing pile of mandibles and eyes. I saw the sudden fear in its eyes and I knew who I was. 'This is rage,' I thought as I screamed with thunder and followed my axe."

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The Basics

The barbarian is a Dungeons & Dragons® high-risk and high-reward warrior. This gambling slayer dares to enter the bloodiest melees in light armor, dealing huge amounts of damage with two-handed weapons and mighty rages. Everything about the barbarian's powers is visceral and gripping. You want a class feature that helps you do more damage? It triggers when you bloody or drop an enemy, so that each blow can push a crescendo of violence. Do you get lucky and score a critical hit? Your reward is to make a free attack. Looking for the increased damage that the class deserves to fill the striker role? It's not lurking in a quarry mechanic or a sneak attack that requires careful tactics; increased damage is built into every barbarian power. You roll more dice than everyone else. And if you don't think *that's* fun, a fancy-pants warlock is somewhere waiting for you.

You don't have to be tricky, tactical, or clever to have fun with the barbarian. You have to roleplay a bloody-minded warrior, figure out when you want to rage with your strongest attack powers, and live with the fact that your power and your low defenses make you an excellent target. As a barbarian, you've made Achilles's original Homeric choice: one year as a lion instead of decades as a sheep.

Primal Power's Barbarian Material

A year or two ago, in the dim mists of history when we started publishing 4th Edition, our first power supplement, *Martial Power*™, devoted itself solely to the mechanics of playing fighters, rangers, rogues, and warlords. Our later power supplements have devoted increasing attention to what it feels like to play a character of a particular class. The most recent power book, *Primal Power*™, gets it right.

Primal Power devotes pages to roleplaying each of the primal classes. The three pages on roleplaying the barbarian deal with topics including barbarians in civilization, the manner in which barbarians adopt specific animals as totemic symbols and sources of power, rage as a character personality, how to tune your barbarian's impact on the PC group, and roleplaying advice for each of the four barbarian builds.

Chapter 5 of *Primal Power* provides more background on the relationship of the primal spirits to people such as barbarians who live on the spirit way. The list of the elder spirits includes spirits for which barbarians have fond feelings, such as Blood Cousin, Carver, Old Grandfather, Primal Beast, Stormhawk and Whisper. Several of the feats and powers appearing later in this article are inspired by the elder spirits as they have been introduced in *Primal Power*.

Primal Power also introduces two new barbarian builds, the thunderborn barbarian and the whirling barbarian, both of which we'll cover in more detail in this article.

Feral Might

Feral Might isn't a class feature in its own right. Instead it's an umbrella category, or a feature that enables you to choose one of four distinct class features that correspond directly to the four current barbarian builds. The different Feral Might class features shape your play experience and character creation choices to varying degrees. We'll touch on each in the "Barbarian Builds" section below since the choice of a Feral Might feature is a build choice rather than a feature common to all barbarians.

Rage

We wanted the barbarian's rage powers to feel memorable and significant instead of feeling the same. Instead of making rages an at-will or encounter power, we pegged them as daily powers and turned them into the barbarian's most lethal attacks. Some rages call on the spirits of ancient ancestors, others rely on spirits of great predators or on the original Primal Beast. Each rage power starts with a deadly attack and initiates a specific rage that provides uniquely powerful bonuses or abilities. The benefits of being in a rage vary from defensive boosts (*macetail's rage*) to big offensive bonuses (*savage juggernaut rage* in *Primal Power*). The rage lasts until the end of the encounter or until you use another rage.

As a barbarian, you have a different understanding of the value of your daily power than other characters. Most characters, or at least most other careful *players*, view daily powers as important resources that they should use only in dire situations. It's customary for most characters to hold on to their daily powers until they perceive that it's necessary to spend the daily power to salvage a dangerous situation.

The barbarian is designed for players who don't want to have to hold back and gauge whether the time is right to spend a daily resource. When you use a rage early in an encounter, you not only deal a great deal of damage, you also gain the rage's continuing benefit, an ability that's likely to shape the rest of the fight. If you're playing a barbarian already, you know the real reason it pays to rage early in an encounter: Unlike the at-will attacks of other characters, each of your at-will attacks comes with a built-in bonus that applies only when you are raging. Most of these rage bonuses to at-will barbarian attacks increase the attacks' damage, often by quite a bit.

At-Will Attacks

In one crucial case, we couldn't possibly have added more damage to a barbarian's at-will attack. *Devastating strike* is already the game's highest damage at-will attack power. You pay for that by granting a +2 attack bonus to every attacker until the start of your next turn. We couldn't very well add more damage to an attack that is already dealing at least 1d8 extra damage. Therefore *devastating strike's* rage bonus removes the power's drawback. Enter a rage and you can use *devastating strike* without worrying about making yourself easier to hit.

Devastating strike is the cornerstone at-will attack for most barbarians, or at least their second at-will attack after the at-will choice that roars straight out of your build. Be warned that if you make a habit of using *devastating strike* every round when you are not raging, you might also make a habit of hitting the ground yelling, "Cleric! Cleric!"

Both of the barbarian builds introduced in *Primal Power*, the thunderborn barbarian and the whirling barbarian, have at-will attacks that can deal considerably more damage when used while you are raging. *Howl of fury* adds your Constitution modifier to damage dealt in a blast, so that you might be adding four or five damage apiece against multiple targets. *Whirling rend*, the at-will attack that requires the use of two weapons, adds your Dexterity modifier to damage dealt to two targets.

Rage Strike

Playing a barbarian should be simple. Rage early, strike often, slashing from foe to foe. No one demands finesse from a barbarian.

Some players make the class simpler by more-or-less ignoring one of the barbarian's class features: the option of using *rage strike* to spend a rage power to make a simple high-damage attack while you are already raging. In truth, at low level, ignoring *rage strike* makes perfect sense. You can't use *rage strike* at all until you gain your second rage power at 5th level. Until you've gained a *third* rage power at 9th level, you might not feel that you have an extra rage power that you're willing to burn for no effect other than a big-handful-of-damage-dice attack.

So ignoring *rage strike* through most of the heroic tier makes sense. When you move into paragon tier, treat *rage strike* as a new trick in your arsenal that requires you to keep track of the pacing of each encounter compared to what you expect out of the adventuring day. If the fight you are in feels like a prelude to more dangerous or significant encounters later in the day, burning a rage power to use *rage strike* might waste a rage that could give you rage benefits through an entire later encounter. But if you're near the end of an adventuring day and you have more rage powers left than encounters you expect to fight in, you've entered the *Rage Strike* Zone. We designed *rage strike* so that you can have a big bang from a daily attack power even if you were already locked into an earlier rage that was providing the ongoing effects you wanted to keep in the encounter. Stay in the rage you started with, convert your other rage power into a big pile of damage dice using *rage strike*, and deal one-half damage if you miss.

Alternatively, if you play like a lot of barbarians I've shared the gaming table with, you'll ignore considerations of careful tracking and use *rage strike* at some point when you want to do a lot of damage to a single enemy in a big hurry. That's perfectly in keeping with the barbarian ethos—feel free to ignore anyone who tells you that you should be saving your rages for later.

Rampage

Once per round, when you score a critical hit with a barbarian attack power, you can immediately make a melee basic attack as a free action. You do not have to attack the same target that you scored a critical hit against.

Unlike *rage strike*, Rampage is the barbarian class feature you *want* to use every fight but can't, unless you have a freaky supernatural relationship with your d20. The Rampage feature has a few subtle effects on how you fight, your choice of weapons, and your choice of feats as you rise in level. Round-by-round, the possibility of a Rampage might incline you toward choosing positions within reach of at least two enemies. A single extremely tough enemy who can survive one of your critical hits is worth targeting with an immediate Rampage follow-up, but many enemies crumple under your critical hits, particularly in the later rounds of an encounter. Taking positions

beside multiple enemies can be a subtly offensive posture for the barbarian, if you lack multitarget attacks.

Alternatively, you could employ a reach weapon such as a glaive or a halberd or a greatspear. Setting up potential Rampage attacks against enemies 2 squares away provides simple but fun tactical movement options, nothing that should be in the way of your standard raging frenzy.

At higher levels, feats that intersect with Rampage could be a good investment, especially if you're the lucky type who rolls more than your share of critical hits. Charging Rampage, at paragon tier, lets you use Rampage with a charge attack instead of a simple melee basic attack. At epic tier, you might want to take Axe Mastery or Heavy Blade Mastery or Spear Mastery—the feat corresponding to your chosen weapon that allows you to score critical hits on a natural 19 or 20.

Rampage Interactions with Feral Might

In play, the only oddities you might encounter with Rampage rise out of its occasional interactions with Feral Might class features and the barbarian powers associated with those features. Since each of the Feral Night features provide effects that trigger when you bloody an enemy or reduce an enemy to 0 hit points, and since critical hits deal so much damage, your Rampage attack frequently triggers at the same time as when you receive your Feral Might benefit or qualify to trigger the class feature power associated with Feral Might.

The good news is that you cause an extra helping of carnage with slaughter on top: When you receive two free actions triggered by the same event, you can use the free actions in any order you like. For example, as a thaneborn barbarian, your Feral Might class feature provides the *roar of triumph* encounter power that's triggered when your attack reduces an enemy to 0 hit points. If you reduce an enemy to 0 hit points with a critical hit using a barbarian attack power, you also qualify for a Rampage attack. Use the free action *roar of triumph* first to soften up enemies within 5 squares of you with a –2 penalty to all defenses, then use Rampage to hit one of those enemies with a melee basic attack.

Rampage's interactions with two other Feral Might features are similarly straightforward. The *warcry* power from the Thunderborn Wrath Feral Might feature pushes all enemies in a blast, so if you're going to use it against enemies who are adjacent to you, use Rampage first, then follow up with *warcry*. The *whirling lunge* power associated with the whirling slayer build is fittingly more of a double-helping of carnage since it is packaged with 2 squares of shifting followed by automatic damage. Use *whirling lunge* before or after your Rampage attack, whichever works best.

The only Feral Might barbarian power that has a problematic interaction with Rampage is the *swift charge* power associated with the Rageblood Vigor build. Playing by the rules, a critical hit that reduces an enemy to 0 hit points and triggers both Rampage and *swift charge* offers only one way to time the attacks. Since you cannot take actions after making a charge attack, you need to use the Rampage attack first, then make the *swift charge*. That's the letter of the rules, and the way you need to play in situations that stick precisely to the rules. In my game, I admit that I let the Rageblood Vigor barbarian play by the spirit of the power—the free action Rampage attack is the one attack I let the barbarian make after using *swift charge*. It doesn't break the game, it's more fun, and it feels right.

Race

Humans, half-orcs and goliaths are the most common barbarians, but it can be great fun roleplaying a barbarian from a race that ordinarily chooses other paths. The following list of suggested builds indicates the type of barbarian likely to thrive when playing popular D&D races.

Some of the reasoning behind the assignments is subtle. Ability score adjustments count for a great deal, but in a case like the minotaur, who is equally competent as a rageblood barbarian or as a thunderborn barbarian, we've leaned toward thunderborn barbarian so that *war cry* can clear space for the minotaur's signature charge.

Unlikely Barbarians

Barbarians make great fish-out-of-water characters. Players who thrive when roleplaying the oddball are drawn to playing barbarians in otherwise civilized settings, particularly if they can play characters who are already unlikely barbarians. One of my friends swears by her 3.5 gnome barbarian. She had company; at a Gen Con seminar as we were working on 4th Edition, I asked how many people were playing each race and each class. Out of around eighty seminar attendees, only two people were playing gnomes. The same two guys raised their hands as the only people playing barbarians; yes, two more gnome barbarians.

RACE AND BUILD

Deva	Thaneborn Barbarian
Doppelganger	Whirling Barbarian
Dragonborn	Thaneborn Barbarian
Drow	Whirling Barbarian
Dwarf	Rageblood Barbarian
Eladrin	Thaneborn Barbarian
Elf	Whirling Barbarian
Genasi	Rageblood Barbarian
Gnoll	Whirling Barbarian
Gnome	Thaneborn Barbarian
Goliath	Rageblood Barbarian
Half-Elf	Thaneborn Barbarian
Half-Orc	Whirling Barbarian
Halfling	Whirling Barbarian
Human	Rageblood Barbarian
Kalashtar	Thaneborn Barbarian
Minotaur	Thunderborn Barbarian
Shadar-Kai	Whirling Barbarian
Longtooth Shifter	Rageblood Barbarian
Razorclaw Shifter	Whirling Barbarian
Revenant	Rageblood Barbarian
Tiefling	Thaneborn Barbarian
Warforged	Thunderborn Barbarian

Ability Scores

We'll cover most specific ability score discussion in the build write-ups that follow. Here are general notes on what the six ability scores have to offer you.

Strength: As your attack score, Strength is your primary ability. Ignore it only when you are set on roleplaying a character who is less competent than the average dire bear.

Constitution: Many barbarians make Constitution their second or third ability score despite its pairing with Strength in the Fortitude defense. Hit points matter a great deal to you, since your defensive strategy amounts to enduring what the enemy can dish out while dishing out enough damage to drop the enemy first. Healing surges likewise matter. After prioritizing Constitution, you might choose feats such as Toughness and Durable that add to your hit points and healing surges. Raising your Constitution score also allows you to achieve more from the rage and utility powers that play off your Constitution modifier, so thaneborn and whirling barbarians who care more about other abilities can benefit from a higher Constitution.

Dexterity: Your Barbarian Agility feature provides a +1 bonus to AC and Reflex as long as you are not in heavy armor. Light armor is your friend, so Dexterity competes with Constitution as the most valuable second ability.

Intelligence: None of your class skills rely on Intelligence. None of your standard roleplaying shticks rely on Intelligence. Unless you are plotting an unusual wizard or psion multiclass, Intelligence is the ability you can safely ignore.

Wisdom: You probably can't afford to emphasize Wisdom at the start of your career. It has nothing to do with any of your class features or powers. On the other hand, it is the ability used by three of your class skills. If your character concept emphasizes connection to nature and the primal spirits, you might raise Wisdom slightly and choose Nature and Perception as trained skills. Otherwise Charisma is a better bet for you.

Charisma: Unless you are a thaneborn barbarian, Charisma is a lower priority than Dexterity and Constitution. However, it's nice to have one ability score higher than the other to help your Will, and Charisma comes in handy with the Intimidate skill and with any powers associated with the thaneborn build that you might want to pick up. A sorcerer multiclass is a far more natural spellcasting combo than a wizard multiclass and that about does it for reasons you'll care about your Charisma score.

Barbarian Builds

Your choice of one of the four Feral Might features normally amounts to a choice of your barbarian build, since various at-will and encounter powers function much better if you possess a specific Feral Might feature. If you're a maverick who splices between builds, you might have a slightly different perspective on the following build-specific advice.

If you are happy with your barbarian's race but still aren't sure which build you want to pursue, consider the following general advantages of the builds.

Durability: The rageblood barbarian generates slightly better defense through a powerful offense.

Leadership: Alone among the builds, the thaneborn barbarian has features and powers that help its allies fight better.

Control: The thunderborn barbarian's powers affect multiple enemies and push foes around the battlefield. It's as close as the barbarian comes to fighting like a controller.

Carnage: Care to deal damage with another helping of damage on top? Play the whirling barbarian, whose shifty tricks also help deliver the damage where it can have the most impact.

Rageblood Barbarian

All things considered, the rageblood barbarian feels the most like the barbarian class from earlier editions of D&D. High Strength leads to high melee damage and a high Constitution boosts your hit points. The combination of two high ability scores that contribute to Fortitude keeps the other two defenses low.

Like other barbarians, rageblood barbarians take a lot of damage most every encounter. That's why barbarians have hit points and healing surges as if they were defenders. However, you don't have defenses like a defender—what you've got is a good offense. As a rageblood barbarian, a good offense that reduces enemies to 0 hit points turns into a good defense, since each enemy dropped provides temporary hit points based on your Constitution modifier.

As a mark of your bloodthirsty perfection, these temporary hit points are yours when the enemy you've reduced to 0 hit points had only 1 hit point—minions are fair game. DMs who count too much on minions might find that minions are not so much obstacles for an in-form rageblood barbarian as blood sacrifices—in other words, minions are turbo-boosts rather than speed bumps.

Your Feral Might power, *swift charge*, is all offense. The brilliance of *swift charge* is that one of your opportunity attacks can trigger it. You're no heavily armored fighter or divine challenging paladin, but when an enemy dares to give you an opportunity attack, you sometimes manage a burst of damage, speed, and more damage that make the defenders envious.

Ability Scores

Strength is the attack ability for all barbarians. Constitution is the ability that helps boost powers that are associated with the rageblood build. Dexterity helps Reflex and AC and might help you qualify for specific weapon mastery feats later in epic tier. A likely ability score array, before racial adjustments, looks something like this.

RAGEBLOOD ABILITY SPREAD

SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY
16	STR Strength	13	DEX Dexterity	10	WIS Wisdom
16	CON Constitution	8	INT Intelligence	11	CHA Charisma

Powers and Feats

If you want to play up your defense, choose the at-will power designed for the rageblood barbarian, *recuperating strike*, which can generate temporary hit points every round you hit with it. If you'd rather emphasize a versatile offense, consider the *howl of fury* power introduced in *Primal Power*. Although thematically associated with the thunderborn barbarian, *howl of fury* works equally well for a rageblood barbarian with a high Constitution.

As for all builds, many of your best choices of encounter powers have an improved effect if you have the Rageblood Vigor feature. Combined with your ability to generate temporary hit points, the *desperate fury* power at 1st level is particularly useful because it allows you to take a small amount of damage (which you might not take if you have timed the power to coincide with a temporary hit point gain) for a chance to reroll a missed attack—a luxury the all-or-nothing barbarian seldom enjoys.

Most of the Thunderborn Wrath encounter powers place their Constitution-related bonuses inside the portion of the power that supplies a bonus effect for characters that have the Thunderborn Wrath feature—unlike the *howl of fury* at-will, choosing from Thunderborn Wrath encounter powers doesn't particularly benefit you.

The one feat you obviously want to pick up early in your career is Improved Rageblood Vigor from *Player's Handbook® 2*. An additional 5 temporary hit points each time you use Rageblood Vigor is too big a gift to overlook.

Combinations to Avoid

Since temporary hit points don't stack, specific races and magic items (and certain allied leaders!) are slightly less advantageous for rageblood barbarians than for other barbarians. To choose one example, warforged have Strength and Constitution bonuses, but the warforged racial ability generates temporary hit points, so warforged barbarians coming out of the Mournlands do better as thunderborn barbarians.

Thaneborn Barbarian

Most barbarians are somewhat selfish warriors. They wreak monstrous havoc but aren't likely to help their allies achieve similar feats. As the thaneborn barbarian, you are the exception. When you bloody an enemy, you *or your ally* who is the next to attack that creature gains an attack bonus equal to your

Charisma modifier. When you use your *roar of triumph* encounter power after dropping an enemy, all enemies around you are shaken by fear and take a penalty to defense until the end of your next turn. Unlike the other barbarians, you aren't about hogging the kill. Allied strikers and controllers have more success fighting by your side if the party lacks a full-fledged leader.

Ability Scores

Strength is still your attack ability, but Charisma fuels all your leader-style intimidation techniques of your enemies. Races such as the eladrin, gnome, and deva that aren't typically associated with barbarian-style heroics can make good thaneborn barbarians.

THANEBORN ABILITY SPREAD

SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY
16	STR Strength	13	DEX Dexterity	10	WIS Wisdom
11	CON Constitution	8	INT Intelligence	16	CHA Charisma

Powers and Feats

None of the barbarian's at-will attacks speak specifically to your build. You are free to mix *devastating strike* with whichever other at-will suits you best.

Perhaps more than other characters, you might the encounter powers that are linked to your build most interesting. The Thaneborn Triumph riders maximize your Charisma-driven impact on the enemy. If you're not interested in maximizing such penalties, it's possible the thaneborn build wasn't your best choice.

Player's Handbook 2 didn't provide low-level utility powers that spoke specifically to your build, so *Primal Power's feral rejuvenation* at 2nd level corrects that omission.

The Improved Roar of Triumph feat isn't as good as Improved Rageblood Vigor, mostly because the *roar of triumph* booster functions only when you are raging. At low levels, that's only once a day. As you rise in level, Improved Roar of Triumph becomes an option, but probably not a necessity.

Fight Monsters, Not Minions

It's slightly ironic that the barbarian who rocks its enemies with fear turns out to be the barbarian build that is least effective cutting through minions! All the other barbarian builds have features that can eliminate minions a few at a time. The Thaneborn Triumph feature triggers when you bloody an enemy, and minions don't get bloodied, just slain. As a thaneborn barbarian, you have an incentive to find the biggest monster and go toe-to-toe, not to dance with the minions.

Thunderborn Barbarian

The thunderborn barbarian from *Primal Power* can deal automatic thunder damage enemies to him or her with the Feral Might feature whenever he or she bloodies an enemy, then push enemies away using *war cry*. If the ability to reshape the battlefield and hit multiple enemies with blast attacks appeals to you, the thunderborn build of weapon attacks and small controller-style blast effects is for you.

Ability Scores

Like the rageblood build, you care most about Strength and Constitution. Constitution increases the thunder damage you deal with *war cry* and boosts most of the encounter powers linked to Thunderborn Wrath.

THUNDERBORN ABILITY SPREAD

SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY
16	STR Strength	13	DEX Dexterity	10	WIS Wisdom
16	CON Constitution	8	INT Intelligence	11	CHA Charisma

Powers and Feats

Howl of fury is your best at-will attack choice. After *howl of fury*, choose as you like.

As usual, the encounter powers marked for better effect with the Thunderborn Wrath feature do work substantially better for you. Thanks to the fact that you share the rageblood barbarian's interest in the Constitution score, you have better results with the relatively high number of utility powers and rage powers that improve when you have a high Constitution modifier.

Thunderborn Rage is a scary-good feat you do not want to miss at heroic tier since it increases the thunder damage you deal with Thunderborn Wrath by 5.

Whirling Barbarian

Where the thaneborn barbarian dabbles as a leader, the rageblood barbarian roughly mimics a durable defender, and the thunderborn barbarian plays like a minor controller, the whirling barbarian is all striker. Wielding two weapons, the whirling barbarian deals an ungodly amount of damage. Instead of requiring multiple attack rolls as the two-weapon ranger does, the whirling barbarian's powers generally deal a second portion of automatic damage if the first attack hits. Shift abilities and combat advantage generated from the Whirling Slayer feature help deliver the damage where it can have the most impact.

Ability Scores

As a build that emphasizes Dexterity, the whirling barbarian opens a new avenue for races with Dexterity modifiers such as half-orcs, elves, and drow. The side effect of a high Dexterity is high Reflex and high AC relative to other barbarians, a side effect that increases this double-striker's durability.

WHIRLING ABILITY SPREAD

SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY
16	STR Strength	16	DEX Dexterity	10	WIS Wisdom
11	CON Constitution	8	INT Intelligence	13	CHA Charisma

Powers and Feats

Whirling rend is your must-have attack power, and *pressing strike* is an excellent second option.

The powers associated with Whirling Slayer are of interest to you, starting with the high damage *whirling frenzy* at 1st level that hits creatures in a close burst 1. As a nice touch, and as a small warning, this power breaks our usual pattern by also attacking any allies who make the mistake of being too close to you. I love the feel of this power for the barbarian, posing a slight threat to allies while posing a giant threat to enemies.

It's worth noting that the rest of your whirling slayer encounter powers don't have this problem, at least not at present! And your Whirling Slayer encounter powers are good. From a pure-power perspective, I'm not sure it would be worth it to multiclass into ranger or tempest fighter and experiment with two weapon powers from other classes. As a unique character concept it could be fun.

Of the feats specifically tailored for your build, Swift Slayer is interesting if you want to be considerably faster when you shift using Whirling Slayer after dropping an enemy. At paragon tier, Double Lunge significantly increases the damage you deal with *whirling lunge*.

Double the Weapon Costs

Characters who fight with two weapons feel the pressure to equip two magic items. The pressure is somewhat reduced on you because few of your powers require you to make an attack roll using the off-hand weapon. You roll damage with the off-hand weapon often, but you frequently use your primary weapon for attack rolls.

Since you can use a one-handed weapon in your off-hand, you might choose to wield a higher damage sword or axe or opt for a weapon that can be thrown to give yourself a ranged attack option.

Alternatively you can use one of the double weapons detailed in *Adventurers Vault 2* and fight as if you were using a weapon in each hand.

Barbarians and Items

Like other melee weapon strikers, your first priority is your weapon. You can choose from any number of compelling and fun magic weapons, but your first decision is which weapon you wish to use.

Your powers let you roll more [W] dice than other characters. A big-damage-die weapon such as a greataxe or a greatsword is what you want, and two-handed weapons are part of your identity.

Adventurer's Vault™ complicated the choice of weapons by introducing a few superior weapons that are well worth a Weapon Proficiency feat. The fullblade and greatspear are worthwhile, but the execution axe and mordenkrad set themselves apart because of their brutal 2 and brutal 1 traits.

As a barbarian, you roll a lot of dice. Being able to reroll all dice that come up as a 1, or as a 1 or a 2, is an immensely satisfying trick. You probably might have been willing to pay gp to have that effect on a magic weapon—now you have the brutal mechanic in addition to whatever your magic weapon accomplishes. If you're a whirling barbarian fighting with weapons in one hand, you weren't left out: The khopesh and the craghammer offer brutal 1 and brutal 2 traits as weapons that can be used in one hand.

Other Items

A few scattered magic items are particularly good for barbarians, including rageblood armor in *Player's Handbook 2* and a couple sets of barbarian-themed magic items in *Adventurer's Vault 2* (Golden Lion's Battle Regalia for the thaneborn barbarian and Reaper's Array).

This article aims to supply a number of other magic item choices that might interest any barbarian. Many of the waist-slot items, gloves, and tattoos that follow interact with your rage. Others trigger when you use your Feral Might feature.

Hands Slot Items

Not surprisingly, barbarians favor gloves that augment their lethal attacks. The most common magic gloves created specifically for barbarians enhance rage powers and the Rampage class feature.

Rampaging Slayer's Gloves — Level 6+

Woven from the fur and interlocking claws and teeth of great predators, these nasty-looking gloves snarl and shift around your hands when you fly into your rampage.

Lvl 6 1,800 gp Lvl 26 1,125,000 gp
Lvl 16 45,000 gp
Item Slot: Hands
Property: You gain a +4 item bonus to damage rolls for attacks from your Rampage class feature.
Level 16: +8 item bonus.
Level 26: +16 item bonus.
Power (Daily): Free Action. Trigger: You hit with an attack that uses your Rampage class feature. *Effect:* The attack deals 2[W] extra damage.

Twice-Clawed Gauntlets — Level 4+

The ritual which creates these leather or hide gauntlets merges the claws of a second predator onto the paws of a base creature, so that the claws on your gloves shift magically between the natural weapons of two great predators.

Lvl 4 840 gp Lvl 24 525,000 gp
Lvl 14 21,000 gp
Item Slot: Hands
Property: You gain a +2 item bonus to damage rolls while raging.
Level 14: +4 item bonus.
Level 24: +6 item bonus.
Power (Daily): Free Action. You gain a +4 bonus to attack rolls when using the *rage strike* power.

Waist Slot Items

When you start raging, the only sure thing is that someone is going to die. Magic belts, with defensive properties that kick in when you enter your rage, make it that much more likely that your enemy will bleed out instead of you.

Belt of Feral Might — Level 3

This belt intensifies the rageblood that flows through your veins.

Item Slot: Waist 680 gp
Property: When you gain temporary hit points from your Rageblood Vigor class feature, you can add your Strength modifier to the temporary hit points gained.

Rager's Belt — Level 2

This double-thick leather and scale belt might literally be the only thing holding your guts together.

Item Slot: Waist 520 gp
Property: When you drop to 0 hit points or fewer while raging, you gain a +4 bonus to your first death saving throw.

Belt of Raging Endurance — Level 9+

The amber glow spreading from this behemoth-hide belt swirls into the spirit aura of your rage, shielding you until the glow flares red.

Lvl 9 4,200 gp Lvl 29 2,625,000 gp
Lvl 19 105,000 gp
Property: You gain 1 healing surge.
Power (Encounter): Immediate Interrupt. *Trigger:* An enemy hits you and causes damage. *Effect:* You gain resist 15 against that attack, but you also take 10 damage at the end of your next turn.
Level 19: Resist 25 damage; take 15 damage.
Level 29: Resist 40 damage, take 20 damage.

Tattoos

As introduced on page 83 of *Adventurer's Vault 2*, tattoos provide unique benefits. You can have only one tattoo at a time. The selection of tattoos below complement tattoos that would already be of interest to barbarians, such as *resurgence tattoo, tattoo of vengeance, long-battle tattoo,* and *fireheart tattoo.*

Twining-Scorpion Tattoo — Level 8+

This tattoo of blood wraps down your forearms onto your wrists. The harshly inked scorpion isn't pretty, but in your hands vengeance is always pretty messy.

Lvl 8 3,400 gp Lvl 28 2,125,000 gp
Lvl 18 85,000 gp

Wondrous Item

Property: When a nonminion enemy scores a critical hit against you while you are raging, you gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls against that enemy until the end of the encounter. You also gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls against that enemy until the end of the encounter.
Level 18: +4 bonus to damage rolls.
Level 28: +6 bonus to damage rolls.

Feral Glory Tattoo — Level 14

The great predator or mighty weapon you've chosen as the subject of this tattoo of blood shifts across your skin an inch or two each time you use it, flowing around your body over the course of the years.

Wondrous Item 21,000 gp

Property: When a nonminion enemy scores a critical hit against you and deals damage, you regain the use of the encounter power you gained from your Feral Might barbarian class feature (in other words, *roar of triumph, swift charge, war cry,* or *whirling lunge*).

Old Wolf's Gloves

Those outside the primal way aren't likely to realize the double meaning in this item's name. Yes, the gloves' magic is strongest when they are stitched from the fur of an aged wolf. But 'Old Wolf' is also a widespread nickname of Old Grandfather, the elder primal spirit whose constant grumbling can't overshadow the fact that he's the world's most skilled survivor.

Old Wolf's gloves appear in some of the earliest stories about Old Grandfather. In these tales, he pretends to lose his axe, his left boot, and his gloves in the exact spot where younger heroes can find them and use them to save themselves and their people from monsters and evil gods.

Toward the end of their lives, some followers of the primal way emulate Old Grandfather, 'accidentally' leaving magic items on distant crags or paths, guided by the advice from the other primal spirits about who might pass that way in the hours or weeks to come.

Dungeon Masters can add these gloves to their campaigns in a variety of ways, and two suggestions for doing so follow.

A Race to the Prize: Primal spirits from another tribe or group arranged for one of the tribe's elders to leave a pair of *Old Wolf's gloves* near a forest shrine, but demonic raiders killed the elder and the hero for which the gloves were meant. The PCs are near enough to cut through the forests to slay the raiders. With luck and speed, the PCs might reach the shrine before the demons have destroyed it and its magic.

Wolf Meditations: While watching the sunrise, one of the primal player characters receives an inspiration—a daydream in which an old wolf claws the secrets of a new ritual into his or her skin. Later in the day, the PCs learn that a huge gray wolf has been killing people across a wide range of the forest, and the primal character's daydream comes into focus: The dream was the secret for how to create a pair of *Old Wolf's gloves*. This message from spirits also mandates a need to send primal heroes against the old wolf. In essence, a pair of *Old Wolf's gloves* can serve as a quest reward for taking down the beast.

Pierced Heart Tattoo — Level 2+

Arrows, spears, swords—anything with a point serves to pincushion the heart at the center of this tattoo of heart.

Lvl 2 520 gp Lvl 22 325,000 gp
Lvl 12 13,000 gp

Wondrous Item

Property: When you use your second wind, you gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls on the next attack you make before the end of your next turn. If you are raging when you use your second wind, you also gain a +2 bonus to the attack roll of that attack.
Level 12: +4 bonus to damage rolls.
Level 22: +6 bonus to damage rolls.

Rage Torc Tattoo — Level 12

Circling the neck like a spiral torc, this tattoo of spirit opens with a notch on one side for the magic to flow through and return.

Wondrous Item 13,000 gp

Property: When you spend an action point to take an extra action, you do not expend the action point if you use a rage attack and the attack misses all its targets.

Barbarian Powers

These powers expand the barbarian's most interesting choices: their arsenal of rage powers.

Always Falling Rage — Barbarian Attack 1

The fury of the waterfall and the relentless push of the waters propels you past any defenses.

Daily ✦ Primal, Rage, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Strength damage, and you knock the target prone.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: You enter the rage of the Always Falling spirit. Until the rage ends, when one of your allies hits an enemy adjacent to you, you can shift 2 squares as an immediate reaction.

Bloodseeker's Rage — Barbarian Attack 1

As you strike, flashes of spectral teeth and blood-red hide reveal the bloodseeker drake predator spirit that inspires your rage.

Daily ✦ Primal, Rage, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Strength modifier damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: You enter the rage of the bloodseeker. Until the rage ends, you can make an opportunity attack against any bloodied enemy adjacent to you that shifts.

Skull-Taker's Rage — Barbarian Attack 1

The ancient berserker spirit that drives this rage doesn't care that its presence tears you apart, vein by vein. It wants the skulls of your enemies, no matter how they've tried to wedge themselves into their cowards' armor.

Daily ✦ Primal, Rage, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Strength modifier damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: You enter the rage of the skull-taker. Until the rage ends, you take 3 damage at the start of each of your turns. This damage cannot be resisted or negated. Until the rage ends, you also have a +1 bonus to your attack rolls.

Ambusher's Rage — Barbarian Attack 5

Blood calls. The ambush drake's throaty roar erupts from your throat as you fling yourself around your wounded enemy in a dizzying set-up for the death blow.

Daily ✦ Primal, Rage, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Strength modifier damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: You enter the rage of the ambusher. Until the rage ends, you can shift 2 squares as a minor action as long as you end the shift adjacent to a bloodied enemy.

Earthquake Dragon's Rage — Barbarian Attack 5

The ground shakes, and the air splits. You can barely hear the voices of your friends asking you to call on a different primal spirit to drive your rage.

Daily ✦ Primal, Rage, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Strength modifier damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: You enter the rage of the earthquake dragon. Until the end of your next turn or until the rage ends (whichever is longer), whenever an enemy hits you, you deal thunder damage equal to your Strength modifier to each creature within 5 squares of you.

Carver's Raging Glory — Barbarian Attack 9

Your axe rises in time with the ocean's pounding waves. Your axe falls with power borrowed from each crashing death.

Daily ✦ Primal, Rage, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Strength modifier damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: You enter the rage of Carver's glory. Until the rage ends, whenever you reduce any enemy to 0 hit points, your next attack deals 5 extra damage.

Stoneroot Rage — Barbarian Attack 9

The power wells up from deep within the unassailable earth.

Daily ✦ Primal, Rage, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Strength modifier damage, and target is slowed (save ends).
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: You enter the rage of Stoneroot. Until the rage ends, you gain resist 5 to all damage.

Whisper's Blades Rage **Barbarian Attack 15**

A shifting aura of moons and stars outlines your form. As blood drips from your blade and from the enemy who never saw your cut coming, you can hear the wicked laughter of the trickster spirit.

Daily ✦ Primal, Rage, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Strength modifier damage, and deal the same amount of damage to a different enemy within 5 squares.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: You enter the rage of Whisper's blades. Until the rage ends, once per round when you hit with a melee attack on your turn, you can choose to reduce the damage of that attack by 10 and deal 10 damage to another creature within 5 squares of you.

Fortune's Ravagers Rage **Barbarian Attack 19**

Sometimes good luck leads directly to bad, and when your foe is lucky enough to make an extraordinarily effective attack, you're right there to slam that luck back down its throat.

Daily ✦ Primal, Rage, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength vs. AC
Hit: 4[W] + Strength modifier damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: You enter the rage of the fortune's ravager. Until the rage ends, you can repeat the rage's attack as an immediate interrupt that targets any enemy adjacent to you that rolls a critical hit with an attack.

FEATS

The barbarian feats that follow play off the personalities and powers of the elder spirits introduced in Chapter 5 of *Primal Power*. If your campaign doesn't use our standard primal spirits, shift the flavor as you like.

Heroic Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of any level who meets the prerequisites.

Blood Cousin's Tribe [Tribal]

Prerequisites: Barbarian

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus to damage rolls when raging. This bonus increases by 1 for each ally within 10 squares of you who has at least one tribal feat.

Whisper's Advice

Prerequisites: Barbarian

Benefit: When an enemy that is adjacent to you recharges a power at the start of its turn, you gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls against that enemy until the end of your next turn. The bonus increases to +3 at 11th level and +4 at 21st level.

Paragon Tier

Any feat in this section is available to a character of 11th level or higher who meets the prerequisites.

Angry Grandfather

Prerequisites: Barbarian

Benefit: You gain a bonus to death saving throws equal to the number of rages you have expended since your last extended rest.

About the Author

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Wizard Essentials:
Secrets of the Spiral Tower

By Eytan Bernstein
Illustrations by Drew Baker

"The warriors among us want to see the whites of their eyes. If I am ever close enough to see white, it will be the end of me. Thus, I have learned to fire from afar, placing barriers in the path of my enemies and controlling their every step."
~Devon Darin, War Wizard of Cormyr

The wizard represents the pinnacle of arcane power in the D&D® game. A wizard had the best tricks, the most powerful magic, and the greatest surprises. Although other classes have caught up with the wizard in terms of power, the wizard still has some of the greatest versatility of any class in the game. No other class combines an ability to affect multiple creatures with a mastery of the battlefield and ritual supremacy in the way that a wizard does. However, as in previous editions, wizards have to rely on members of other roles to defend them so that they can focus on what they do well.

And what is it that the wizard does best? Wizards are, first and foremost, controllers. They use their powers to affect numerous opponents at once, especially minions. They control the movement of enemies on the battlefield. They impose conditions on a large numbers of foes that allow their allies to swoop in for the kill.

THE BASICS

"Think yer too good fer cantrips boy!? Well, do yer?! If yer can't produce a decent light spell, how do yer expect to make a fireball?"

~Bambar Spearsplitter, dwarf wizard

Regardless of your build, character design choices, and other character decisions, your role remains the same. As a wizard, your job is to direct the flow of combat by keeping enemies busy. You scatter them with burst effects, slow and immobilize them, put barriers and terrain in their way, use forced movement to move them where you want, and otherwise control their location and position. Your allies depend on you to soften your enemies and put them in the right tactical position.

You are *not* on the battlefield to deal large amounts of damage to a single foe, though you can contribute to the damage your allies deal to enemies. Let strikers worry about the bulk of the damage. Rely on defenders to stay up front and occupy your foes, and allow the leaders to heal you on the occasions when enemies break through and come after you (and you better hope this scenario doesn't happen a lot).

Let's look at the class features that all wizards have in common, and then we'll discuss the different choices in terms of implements. Because implement mastery determines all real mechanical choices, build is less of a factor.

Cantrips

As soon as they begin their arcane studies, all wizards learn cantrips—basic magic spells that they can perform to aid them in everyday life. Cantrips perform a variety of simple, yet useful, functions. The basic wizard cantrips are *ghost sound*, *light*, *mage hand*, and *prestidigitation*.

Ghost sound produces all sorts of sounds, ranging from a whisper to a yelling creature. The sound can emanate from a square or object within 50 feet of you. People neglect this cantrip because it requires a standard action, but it can be extremely useful in producing distractions.

Light causes an object or square to shed bright light. Although not as bright as a sunrod, you don't want to let the entire dungeon know of your presence.

Mage hand allows you to pick up and move objects weighing up to 20 pounds. Twenty pounds is not a tiny amount, so you can do a lot with cantrip. Stuck in a jail cell? Want to snatch the keys from the belt of the sleeping jailer? *Mage hand* is the perfect spell for you.

Prestidigitation allows you to do everything wizards do to make them look impressive. Light candles, summon a flower to your hand, create whirlwinds to sweep the floor, make a card disappear from your hand, or perform another trick or minor act of magic. The spell can do both tricks as well as practical acts, but it can't do anything that could be misconstrued as a true act of magical power. It can't harm a foe, though enemies might be frightened by a display of magic, mistaking it for something dangerous.

Ritual Casting

Wizards are the undeniable masters of rituals. Not only do they start with three rituals of their choice, and they also use Intelligence as their primary statistic and start with proficiency in Arcana. Consider rituals to be an important way to supplement your versatility. Although you can't use them in combat, you can acquire more and more rituals that can aid the party while adventuring. They can help you bypass barriers, locate treasure, spy on enemies, and perform countless other functions.

Spellbook

In addition to containing rituals, a wizard's spellbook performs a unique function. It contains the wizard's daily and utility spells. Whenever you gain access to a new daily or utility spell, you learn two spells. When you wake from an extended rest, you can choose one of the two choices for each of your daily and utility spells. This choice gives wizards a greater versatility than other classes because they essentially have access to two daily and utility powers at each level. Additionally, wizards have a variety of feats they can take that increase the number of powers from which they can choose, including Remembered Wizardry, Aerenal Arcanist, and Expanded Spellbook.

Implement Mastery

When you first create a wizard, you have to make an incredibly important choice. You have to choose which implement to master because your choice decides your approach to power selection. Depending on the implement you select, you might choose an entirely different suite of powers than another wizard.

Orb of Deception

"So you have escaped the nightmare I have created? Your wife does not appear to have been so lucky."
~Bambrelcamp, Gnome Phantasist

The *orb of deception* is an extremely powerful implement in the hands of the crafty illusionist. Once per encounter, when you miss with an illusion attack, you can use the orb to choose a different enemy within 3 squares of the original target. You can reroll the attack against the new target with a bonus equal to your Charisma modifier. As possibly the most powerful of the implement mastery powers, the power is also limited because you can use it only on illusion powers.

Power Selection

When choosing powers for this build, select illusion powers that suit your fancy. You might want to focus on single target illusion powers, but since most illusions are area powers, you should pick whichever illusions you like the best.

Orb of Imposition

"Lucretia the Spider Queen weaves impassable webs. Behind those sticky barriers is that horrid crystal sphere. When I see it glow, I know that escape will be impossible"
~Seth Danger, halfling paladin monk

Wizards have the unique ability to control the battlefield and their foes by affecting large areas. They can also throw out effects that hinder and disable their enemies. However, if foes can shake these effects off easily, their effectiveness is limited. At this point, the *orb of imposition*'s saving throw penalty can come into play.

Saving Throw Penalty

Once per encounter, you can choose one creature that you have targeted with one of your spells that has an effect that a save can end. The creature takes a penalty equal to your Wisdom modifier on the saving throw. This penalty makes it significantly more difficult for enemies to shake off the effect. You should use this ability on daily powers that have effects that disable or cripple opponents, including dazing, stunning, and immobilizing. Don't use it for ongoing damage or slowing, unless you think either of these effects is helpful in your current predicament.

Alternatively, you can use this ability to extend the duration of a wizard at-will power that lasts until the end of your next turn. Instead of finishing at the end of your next turn, the effect lasts an additional turn. You might use the implement's power to extend the slow effect of a *ray of frost*, the duration of a *cloud of daggers*, or to keep a *storm pillar* in place for another turn. Sometimes keeping an enemy slowed is exactly what you need.

Power Selection

Select powers that cripple and disable foes. Unlike most controllers, it matters less whether you affect numerous opponents. For you, taking down individual opponents is more important. If you can keep your foe immobilized, the ranged strikers can assault it while the melee combatants brutalize it up front. If you keep a foe stunned, it can't do anything while your allies destroy it. So ignore summoning powers and direct damage and go for powers that cause disabling conditions, severe penalties, and hinder movement.

Staff of Defense

"Ooooh, a little girl with a big stick! I'm soooo scaywed! Whatcha gonna do? Trip me to death?"
~The last words spoken by Turgis the Dull to Aeris the Black

The *staff of defense* is a great option for wizards who don't wish for the implement to determine the type of magic they practice. This flexibility is especially useful to wizards who focus on a theme, such as a particular element—fire, cold, or electricity, for example. By wielding the staff, you gain a +1 bonus to your AC. In addition, once per encounter as an immediate interrupt, you can add your Constitution modifier to a defense against an attack. Finally, although you can wield the staff as a magic implement, it can also serve as a magic weapon. So when enemies come too close, you can whack them with the staff. Not only does it protect you defensively, it also helps you offensively, though this use of the staff should be a last resort.

Although you could go for the *wand of accuracy*, you might decide that you want the security and defense provided by the *staff of defense*. And when you reach paragon levels, you can choose to take the Second Implement feat so that you have both forms of mastery.

Power Selection

Because the *staff of defense* implement mastery doesn't affect the way you use your powers, you can go with any suite of powers you want. To bolster your defensive theme, you might choose defensive utility powers, such as *shield*, *invisibility*, *blur*, *displacement*, and similar powers.

Tome of Binding

"Why should I risk my neck when I can summon creatures perfectly willing to do it for me?"

~Thromard, merchant mage of Khorvaire

The *tome of binding* allows you to augment the damage of your summoned creatures. Once per encounter, you can choose to use the tome when you cast a summoning spell to increase the damage dealt by all creatures summoned by the spell by an amount equal to your Constitution modifier. You might find this damage increase particularly useful for spells that summon multiple creatures due to the multiple attacks these creatures can make.

Power Selection

As with *the orb of deception*, the *tome of binding* makes your choice of powers easy: You can choose any summoning power you want to receive the best benefit from this implement. Of course, you might want to focus on summoning effects that deal out a high amount of damage, but any summoning powers can work well.

Tome of Readiness

"I studied with him at White Lotus Academy. I never knew he could cast shock sphere. But Thorsten was always full of surprises."

~Shelandra the Daring

The *tome of readiness* allows you to keep an encounter power in your arsenal that you can use when you need it. Once per encounter, you can expend an existing encounter power of an equal or higher level and use this encounter power instead. When you gain a level in which you choose a new encounter power, you can change which power you have stored in your *tome of readiness*.

Power Selection

The *tome of readiness* is a lot like the *staff of defense* in that it doesn't affect which powers you choose and how you use them. Thus you can choose any theme of powers you like and still be effective with the tome. You might select a power that is a good standby no matter what the situation. Or perhaps choose a power that might be useful in specific situations, but not all.

Wand of Accuracy

"So you think you can escape me, Lucretia?! I curse you to this icy tomb!"

~Ilyana the Frostwielder to her archnemesis, Lucretia the Spider Queen

The *wand of accuracy* is the tool of the war wizard. It helps you hit with a spell when accuracy is truly important. For example, Ilyana the Frostwielder desperately wants to take out Lucretia the Spider Queen. Lucretia has been railing on her allies with repeated burst effects that keep them away from her, but if Ilyana can stun her, her allies can move up to the Spider Queen and box her in, ending that tactic.

Power Selection

With the *wand of accuracy*, select spells that deal high damage and spells that have severe effects against a single opponent. *Force cage* and *ice tomb* are great examples because they both impose severe effects on single enemies, but if you miss with them, they don't do anything. Both are perfect spells with which to use the *wand of accuracy* power because the wand helps ensure that you hit what you target.

Abilities

"Magic is not powered by good intentions, pretty incantations, leprechauns, or unicorns. If you're not smart, skilled, and cunning, you don't stand a chance of learning more than the most basic of spells."

~Dazarain, Spellguard of Silverymoon

Wizards favor Intelligence, and they must also consider certain other abilities so that they can use their powers to their fullest. Let's look at the abilities a wizard must consider.

Intelligence

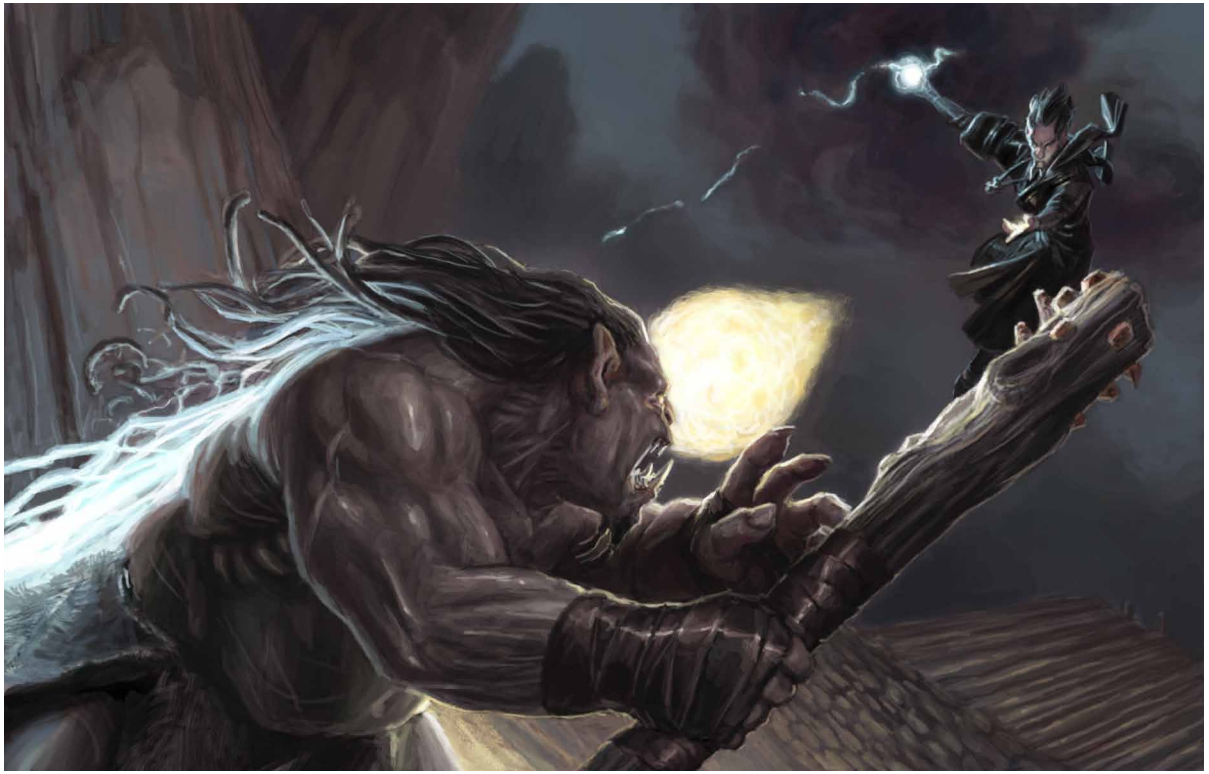
Wizards use Intelligence as their primary attack ability score. It affects attack rolls and damage rolls. Intelligence also contributes to Arcana, a skill you roll frequently in relation to arcane knowledge and arcane rituals. Intelligence adds to Religion as well, which is another skill you might need for rituals.

Wisdom

If you want to pursue the *orb of imposition* implement mastery, having a high Wisdom is extremely important. When you use that class feature, you can add your Wisdom modifier as a penalty to an enemy's saving throws to resist one of your spells. Wisdom also helps if you decide to choose Nature and Heal-based rituals.

Constitution

Although wizards, and all characters for that matter, can benefit from a high Constitution (it boosts your hit points, healing surge value, number of healing surges, and Fortitude), it helps certain wizards more than others. If you use the *staff of defense*, once per encounter you can add your Constitution modifier to a defense as an immediate interrupt.



If you have the *tome of binding*, once per encounter you can add your Constitution modifier to the damage of a summoning spell. Using this implement is a great way to boost the power of your summoned creatures.

Charisma

Most wizards can skimp on Charisma because they need it only if they choose to take Diplomacy, which they can probably live without in many cases. Some might choose to take a decent Charisma to qualify for the Spell Focus feat, which is worthwhile. However, if you're an illusionist, Charisma becomes a necessity. If you use the *orb of deception*, once per encounter, when you miss with an illusion spell, you can choose to reroll the attack against a different creature within 3 squares of the original target. In addition, you add your Charisma modifier to the new attack roll.

Ability Score Spreads

Despite the advice above, you might still find it tricky to get your ability scores just right. The spreads below should help you assign your scores, and they are

based on implement masteries and not builds because implement masteries are an important indicator for your ability scores. Also, the tome of readiness implement has been left off because no ability score is associated with it. You can choose whichever ability scores you wish for that implement mastery.

ORB OF IMPOSITION SPREAD

SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY
8	STR Strength	11	DEX Dexterity	16	WIS Wisdom
11	CON Constitution	16	INT Intelligence	12	CHA Charisma

STAFF OF DEFENSE/TOME OF BINDING SPREAD

SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY
11	STR Strength	10	DEX Dexterity	10	WIS Wisdom
14	CON Constitution	17	INT Intelligence	12	CHA Charisma

WAND OF ACCURACY SPREAD

SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY
8	STR Strength	15	DEX Dexterity	10	WIS Wisdom
11	CON Constitution	17	INT Intelligence	12	CHA Charisma

ORB OF DECEPTION SPREAD

SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY
10	STR Strength	10	DEX Dexterity	10	WIS Wisdom
12	CON Constitution	16	INT Intelligence	16	CHA Charisma

Race

Race plays an extremely important role in making your wizard strong. Races grant ability score bonuses, skill bonuses, and special abilities that enhance the wizard's already strong capabilities. Some races are naturally more suited to certain implement masteries than others. Any race with an Intelligence bonus can succeed well with any implement, but if a race has a bonus to both Intelligence and one of the three secondary abilities used by wizards, it is stronger.

RACE AND BUILD

Race	Recommended Implement Mastery
Changeling/Doppleganger	Orb of deception
Deva	Orb of imposition
Dragonborn	Orb of deception
Drow	Orb of deception, wand of accuracy
Dwarf	Orb of imposition, staff of defense, tome of binding
Eladrin	Wand of accuracy
Elf	Orb of imposition, wand of accuracy
Genasi	Any
Gnoll	Staff of defense, tome of binding, wand of accuracy
Gnome	Orb of deception
Goliath	Staff of defense, tome of binding
Half-elf	Orb of deception, staff of defense, tome of binding
Half-orc	Wand of accuracy
Halfling	Orb of deception, wand of accuracy
Human	Any
Kalashtar	Orb of deception, orb of imposition
Minotaur	Staff of defense, tome of binding
Shadar-kai	Wand of accuracy
Longtooth shifter	Orb of imposition
Razorclaw shifter	Orb of imposition, wand of accuracy
Revenant	Wand of accuracy
Tiefling	Orb of deception
Warforged	Staff of defense, tome of binding

Wizard Feats

To add more options to your wizard, take a look at the following feats.

Heroic Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of any level who meets the feat's other prerequisites.

Themed Spellcasters

Implements are not the only way to plan your wizard. You can also consider themes of spells, such as fire-based casting. This type of wizard takes fire spells and feats that enhance fire magic. Additionally, they focus on acquiring magic items related to fire or that could enhance fire magic. A player might consider races with a connection to fire such as fire genasi and tieflings.

Other themes could include necromancy (death magic), dimensional magic, or storm magic (lightning and thunder spells). You might also choose to reflavor existing spells with your own signature, such as skulls, serpents, stars, a particular color, or another symbol of meaning to you. By customizing your choice of spells, you can make the class and your experience more personal, and thus more fun. That way, not every wizard is the same and your character can stand out a bit more.

Bitter Cold

Prerequisite: Wizard

Benefit: When you hit a creature with a cold wizard power, that creature also takes a -2 penalty to its Fortitude until the end of your next turn.

Far Spell

Prerequisite: Wizard

Benefit: If a wizard power has a range of 10 squares or fewer, increase the power's normal range by 2 squares. If a wizard power has a range of 11-20 squares, increase the power's normal range by 5 squares. This also applies to area powers, so an area burst 1 within 10 becomes an area burst 1 within 12.

Illusionary Stealth

Prerequisite: Wizard, trained in Stealth

Benefit: Whenever you use a wizard illusion power and you hit a target, you gain a feat bonus to Stealth checks equal to your Intelligence modifier until the end of your next turn.

Immolate the Masses

Prerequisite: Wizard

Benefit: When you use a wizard power, you gain 1 temporary hit point for each minion you reduce to 0 hit points with that power.

Paragon Tier Feats

The feats in this section are available to a character of 11th level or higher who meets the feat's other prerequisites.

Acid Splash

Prerequisite: 11th level, Con 13, wizard

Benefit: When you miss with an acid wizard power and would not normally do damage, you deal acid damage equal to your Constitution modifier.

Energy Recovery

Prerequisite: 11th level, Wis 13, wizard

Benefit: Whenever a creature fails a saving throw against an effect from one of your wizard powers, you gain temporary hit points equal to your Wisdom modifier.

Lightning Transport

Prerequisite: 11th level, Con 13, wizard

Benefit: When you reduce a creature to 0 hit points or fewer with a wizard lightning power, you can teleport a number of squares equal to your Constitution modifier as a free action.

Phantasmal Destruction

Prerequisite: 11th level, wizard

Benefit: When you have combat advantage against a creature, any wizard illusion power that you use against that creature scores a critical hit on a roll of 19-20.

Sympathetic Transference

Prerequisite: 11th level, wizard

Benefit: When you immobilize, restrain, or slow an enemy, choose an ally within 20 squares of you that is also suffering the same condition. End that condition.

Wizard Spells

Wizards of any build can use the following spells.

Nightmare Eruption — **Wizard Attack 1**

You bring forth a nightmare in your foe's mind and project it out for its comrades to see.

At-Will ✦ Arcane, Illusion, Implement, Psychic
Standard Action **Ranged** 10
Target: One creature
Attack: Intelligence vs. Will
Hit: 1d8 + Intelligence modifier psychic damage, and any enemy adjacent to the target takes psychic damage equal to your Intelligence modifier.
Level 21: 2d8 + Intelligence modifier damage.

Radiant Pillar — Wizard Attack 3

You conjure a cylinder of light that illuminates the battlefield, searing the eyes of your foes.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Implement, Radiant, Zone
Standard Action **Area** burst 1 within 10
Effect: The burst creates a zone of bright light until the end of your next turn. Creatures are blinded while within the zone. If a creature vulnerable to radiant damage starts its turn within the zone, it takes damage equal to double its vulnerability.

Thunderstaff — Wizard Attack 5

As your enemy comes too close, you slam the butt of your staff into the ground, sending a shockwave that knocks it off its feet and far away from you.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Implement, Thunder
Immediate Interrupt **Melee** 2
Requirement: You must be wielding a staff.
Trigger: An enemy moves to within 2 squares of you.
Target: The triggering enemy
Attack: Intelligence vs. Fortitude
Hit: 2d6 + Intelligence modifier, and the target is deafened and dazed until the end of your next turn.
Miss: Half damage, and the target is deafened until the end of your next turn.
Effect: You push the target 5 squares.

Able Companion — Wizard Utility 6

You conjure a creature of many hands and feet that aids your allies.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Conjuration
Minor Action **Ranged** 10
Effect: You conjure an able companion in an unoccupied square within range until the end of the encounter. When an ally starts its turn adjacent to the companion, that ally can stand or shift 1 square as a free action. You can move the companion 2 squares as a minor action or 6 squares as a move action.

Tome of Transposition — Wizard Attack 9

You open your tome to a page of secrets and flood your foe's mind with them, causing its weak brain to overload.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Implement, Psychic
Standard Action **Ranged** 20
Requirement: You must be wielding a tome.
Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex
Target: One creature
Hit: 4d6 + Intelligence modifier psychic damage, and the target is dazed (save ends).
Miss: Choose another ranged daily spell of equal or lower level to this power from your spellbook. Immediately cast that spell. It must target your original target and it deals half damage.

Dimension Switch — Wizard Utility 16

You and your ally teleport into each other's locations.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Teleportation
Move Action **Close** burst 10
Effect: You and one ally in the burst switch places with each other.

Wand Coupling — Wizard Attack 17

You release a blast of energy from your wand, and as that energy flows outward, it pulses briefly and brightly with a secondary surge of magic.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Implement
Standard Action **Ranged** 10
Requirement: You must be wielding a wand.
Target: One creature
Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex
Hit: 3d6 + Intelligence modifier damage, and you push the target 3 squares. If your wand has an unexpended magic item encounter power, you can use that power as a free action.

Summon Angel Wretch — Wizard Attack 19

A spectral creature composed of numerous wispy black-feathered wings, all joined together at the pinions, attacks with gouts of shadowy noxious gas.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Implement, Necrotic, Poison, Summoning
Minor Action **Ranged** 20
Effect: You summon a Large angel wretch in an unoccupied space within range. The angel wretch has a fly speed of 8. It has a +4 bonus to AC and a +4 bonus to Fortitude. You can give the angel wretch the following special commands.
Standard Action: Close blast 3; targets each creature in blast; Intelligence vs. Fortitude; the target takes ongoing 20 poison damage (save ends).
Standard Action: Melee 1; targets one creature; Intelligence vs. Reflex; 2d8 + Intelligence modifier necrotic damage.
Opportunity Attack: Melee 1; targets one creature; Intelligence vs. Reflex; 2d8 + Intelligence modifier necrotic damage.

Dimensional Journey — Wizard Utility 22

You take a step and reappear well away from your starting point.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Teleportation
Move Action **Personal**
Effect: You teleport 20 squares. You do not need line of sight to your destination.

Orb of Doom — Wizard Attack 27

You create a replica of your orb around your foes, trapping them in a crystalline prison.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Implement
Standard Action **Area** burst 3 within 20
Requirement: You must be wielding an orb.
Target: Each enemy in burst
Attack: Intelligence vs. Will
Hit: Until the end of your next turn, the target is restrained, cannot teleport, and takes a -5 penalty to attack rolls against creatures outside the area of the burst.

Paragon Path

Tome Adept

"I will unlock the mysteries kept within this tome—even those not yet bound within it."

Prerequisite: Wizard, tome implement mastery

As a wizard, you are aware that books are more than the sum of their parts. They are more than paper, binding, ink, and stitches. Hidden within are secrets, knowledge, and mysteries waiting to be unlocked. And as a caster focused on the secrets of words, formulas, and incantations, you are perfectly suited to unlocking the secrets hidden within them.

Tome Adept Path Features

Paper Secrets (11th level): Each time you gain a new level of daily wizard attack spells or wizard utility spells, you learn one extra spell of that level (in other words, add three spells to your spellbook instead of only two). This stacks with other feats and abilities that increase the number of spells in your spellbook.

Secret Formularies (11th level): It costs you half as much as normal to copy rituals into your spellbook. You gain a +2 bonus to skill checks made as part of a ritual.

Tome of Confusion (11th level): When you spend an action point to take an extra action, each enemy you hit with an attack before the end of your turn is dazed until the end of your next turn.

Maze of Words (16th level): When you score a critical hit against an enemy, that enemy is dazed until the end of your next turn.

Tome Adept Spells

Knowledge Blast — Tome Adept Attack 11

You hold up your tome and concentrate all your knowledge through it into a beam of pure energy, firing it at your ignorant foe.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Implement, Psychic
Standard Action **Ranged** 10
Requirement: You must be wielding a tome
Target: One creature
Attack: Intelligence vs. Will
Hit: 2d8 + Intelligence modifier psychic damage, and you push the target 2 squares. The target is dazed and takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls until the end of your next turn.

Ritual Master — Tome Adept Utility 12

Your constant study has revealed the secrets of mysteries that archmages haven't solved.

Daily ✦ Arcane
Free Action **Personal**
Effect: You gain a +10 power bonus to a single ritual skill check.

Librus Phantasma — Tome Adept Attack 20

You open your tome and your foe flows into the book, where it must navigate through an eldritch labyrinth before returning to reality.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Implement, Reliable
Standard Action **Ranged** 10
Requirement: You must be wielding a tome
Target: One creature
Attack: Intelligence vs. Will
Hit: The target is trapped in your tome (save ends). While trapped, the target ceases to exist and can take no actions until it saves. It has line of sight and line of effect to no creature, and no creature has line of sight or line of effect to it. When the target saves, it reappears wherever it was when it was hit by this spell. If that square is occupied, it reappears in the nearest available square of the target's choice.

About the Author

Eytan Bernstein hails from New York City. He spends his days writing and editing history books for a major educational publisher. By night, he works as a game designer, editor, and developer. His many previous credits for Wizards of the Coast include *Adventurer's Vault*, *Open Grave: Secrets of the Undead*, and *Arcane Power*.

Character Concepts

By John Zamarra
Illustrations by Matias Tapia

With the introduction of the new powers and feats in Primal Power, the game landscape changes and opens up new options for primal characters. Whether you're interested in seeing how some of the things within Primal Power can work for your primal character or need a quick character concept for your game, Kiel and Rasa can provide you with something useful. Kiel, a self-styled seismic guardian, can keep all foes on their heels, and Rasa hopes to ensure that every member of his party works at an optimal level . . . and then some.

Kiel, the Seismic Guardian

Primal Power presents the idea of characters who wield the destructive side of nature against their foes. Although feats and powers that emulate earthquakes could thematically fit with a divine or arcane character, the earthquake is a definitive primal assault. Kiel, the seismic guardian, knocks foes down and tosses them around, leaving them pinned and easy to pick off.

As with an earthquake, distance is no refuge from the destructive powers of Kiel, since she uses a reach weapon and chooses primal powers to extend her reach in combat. In terms of weapon choice, the greatspear has damage and accuracy, but the weapon Kiel uses is the glaive due to its heavy blade and polearm properties and the feats available that augment these abilities.

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Race

Due to their natural affinity with mountains and the earth, goliaths are a great fit for the seismic guardian concept both thematically and mechanically. As a result, Kiel is of goliath stock. A dwarf is also an excellent choice for this concept due to a dwarf's durability. A warforged drawn to the powers of life—perhaps seeking to explore the living spirits of rock to better understand its own living nature—can also be a colorful option.

Class

The storm warden featured in *Primal Power* is a perfect fit for the seismic guardian concept because it moves enemies around and causes them to stumble (using slow effects). The earthstrength warden from *Player's Handbook 2* is also a solid choice. Multiclassing presents a fair range of options, especially since the fighter and the barbarian both have strong powers that push, slow, and knock foes prone. To maximize the theme, though, a warden/fighter combination with the Polearm Momentum feat (*Martial Power*) is where Kiel is headed. This interesting variation trades some of the warden's defensive powers for greater offensive ones.

Ability Scores

A storm warden needs Strength to attack, and Constitution is a good choice to bolster due to Armor Class and most of the class's features. However, both Wisdom and Dexterity can help Kiel meet feat requirements and boost the secondary effects of some powers; that said, neither needs to be particularly high. With a custom build, Kiel's ability scores look like this:

Score	Ability
18*	STR Strength
17*	CON Constitution
13	DEX Dexterity
10	INT Intelligence
13	WIS Wisdom
8	CHA Charisma

* Bonuses for race included.

Skills

Every warden gains the Nature skill, and Dungeoneering rounds out Kiel's knowledge of the earth and its dangers. Athletics helps when moving in the mountains, and it works nicely with the goliath's racial bonus and reroll ability. As a defender with a reasonable Wisdom score, Perception is too crucial for Kiel's concept to pass up. So, Kiel has Nature, Perception, Dungeoneering, and Athletics.

Feats

At 1st level, one option feels right for the concept: Sudden Roots (*Player's Handbook 2*). Thematically, the ability to leave a foe stumbling and unable to move at full speed is a perfect fit, and it enhances the defender role nicely.

Powers

Wardens have Font of Life, which helps make Kiel feel like an earthquake since it helps her shake off effects that a save can end. After all, when an earthquake starts, none can stop it—you have to ride it out and hope for the best. Being able to shrug off being stunned or dazed and still keep on shaking things up is good.

Kiel takes *thorn strike* as her first at-will power. This power allows Kiel to yank enemies where she wants them, and it has great synergy with her Nature's Wrath class feature. The *weight of earth* at-will power is a natural choice for her second at-will because it makes the enemy stumble when they want to run and combines nicely with Sudden Roots. *Thunder ram assault* is the obvious choice for an encounter power, and *form of the fearsome ram* augments the pushing with the first effect Kiel has that can knock foes prone.

Level 2: With a little twist to the flavor, *warden's tempest* shakes the ground and tosses a marked enemy wherever Kiel wants it.

For her 2nd-level feat, Kiel could choose between Weapon Expertise or Weapon Proficiency with the greatspear. The glaive she uses has only a +2 proficiency bonus and Kiel's powers require her to hit to back up her claims of being a seismic guardian. The Talenta sharrash (*Eberron® Player's Guide*) is a +3 proficiency polearm, but since it lacks reach, Kiel would give up too much for the sharrash to be worthwhile. So, the greatspear is tempting for this concept, but, in the long run, it requires too heavy an investment in Dexterity for maximum potential. After this back and forth, Kiel ends up with Weapon Expertise (polearms) as her feat at this level, and she can use the feat with her glaive due to the glaive's dual polearm and heavy blade properties.

Level 3: If Kiel had gone the route of an earthstrength warden, *earthgrasp strike* combined with reach could leave an enemy prone and unable to stand up. However, *guardian shock wave* is her choice, allowing her to rock an entire area, potentially knocking enemies prone.

Level 4: Kiel increases her Strength, since it is her most important ability score, and Wisdom, which she needs so that she can qualify for some feats later.

The Battle Awareness feat allows Kiel to make a melee basic attack against an enemy adjacent to her

that shifts away, which puts an enemy between a rock and a hard place. For example, if it shifts away from her, she can attack the enemy, which is still within reach if it tries to attack her allies. If her foe tries to move in a way that provides Kiel with an opportunity attack, Kiel's feat Sudden Roots takes effect and slows this enemy, potentially causing it problems if it was trying to reach a different enemy. This combination is a spectacular way to shut down skirmishers and lurkers. For her skill choice, she takes Endurance.

Level 5: Again, Kiel has several strong options to support her concept. *Earthshaking rend* can come into play and emulate an earthquake in a small area, but it affects both friends and foes. So Kiel takes *storm strike*, with its massive slide 3, or slide 1 on a miss. This excellent power fits the theme of tossing enemies around, and it only gets better at paragon level when those slides include a prone effect.

Level 6: *Bear's endurance* is a solid utility power that emphasizes the unending, irresistible, unstoppable nature of an earthquake. Knocking Kiel unconscious doesn't stop her any longer. The Goliath Greatweapon Prowess feat adds teeth to her attacks.

Level 7: Kiel has no bad options at this level, but *mountain's stature* and *stalker's positioning* are the leading causes of upheaval. *Mountain's stature* is slightly more defensive, though *stalker's positioning* is more flexible, so Kiel takes the latter. The ability to slide an enemy and then use it to shove a second enemy (or ally) 1 square away is comical, perfectly in theme, and tactically powerful.

Level 8: With paragon tier appearing on the horizon, Kiel takes Toughness as this level's feat. Kiel again increases her Strength and this time increases Dexterity.

Level 9: Kiel takes *form of the stalwart mastodon*, upping the Richter scale on her forced movement effects for an entire encounter.

Level 10: Taking a multiclass feat to pick up Come and Get It from the fighter class is extremely tempting at this level. Kiel chooses Impaling Thrust instead to allow some of her hits to have an aftershock effect and pin her enemies too far away to hurt anyone.

Kiel continues the aftershock theme with *guardian's attack* as her utility power, which allows her to reuse the special power of her forms to hurl another enemy prone.

Status Report

So the seismic guardian at level 10 can pull at will, and three encounter powers push, slide, or knock foes prone. For two encounters per day, her forms give either increased forced movement or add push, and both give knock prone attacks, which her utility power lets her reuse when needed. Whenever she takes her second wind, any marked enemy is slowed, and if the enemy is close enough, it slides 1 square. Kiel ranks about a 5 on the Richter scale: She shakes things up and occasionally knocks things down, but she is about to go into overdrive.

Level 11: The choice of paragon paths is difficult since so many great options exist. Stoneblessed (*Player's Handbook 2*) gives +1 reach, bloodwrath guardian (*Player's Handbook 2*) grants threatening reach, and verdant lord (*Player's Handbook 2*) gives reach and prone powers. However, one paragon path stands above the others when combined with the push and slide powers the warden already has: polearm master (*Martial Power*). This path allows Kiel to add 1 square to forced movement, and when you combine the additional movement with Polearm Momentum, a push, pull, or slide 1 can ultimately knock the enemy prone. The bonus to damage rolls provided by Goliath Greatweapon Prowess increases by +1, and Toughness provides a total of 10 hit points instead of only 5.

When her ability scores go up by 1 point, Kiel meets the minimum requirements for the Polearm Momentum feat and retrains Sudden Roots. With her new feat slot, she takes Heavy Blade Opportunity, which allows her to use an at-will power with opportunity attacks. *Weight of earth* fits in there perfectly, so she gives up nothing by retraining out of Sudden Roots.

SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY
21	STR Strength	15	DEX Dexterity	15	WIS Wisdom
18	CON Constitution	11	INT Intelligence	9	CHA Charisma

Level 12: With the addition of Spear Push as her feat, and while using *form of the fearsome ram* for an entire encounter, Kiel can, at will, move an enemy 3 squares with *weight of earth*, leaving it prone, slow, and marked but likely unable to attack her.

Level 13: Kiel trades the *guardian shock wave* power for *rumbling doom*, which hurls a single enemy 3 squares (thanks to her paragon path's feature Forceful Reach) and knocks it prone. The enemy is deafened and marked, and Kiel deals extra damage to nearby marked enemies at the start of her next turn.

Level 14: The Polearm Gamble feat allows Kiel to use *weight of earth* (using *reaching stance*) on any enemy who approaches her. Her ability score increases go into Strength and Constitution.

Level 15: *Form of the avalanche unleashed* replaces *storm strike*. In this form, Kiel gains resist 5 to damage, and she shakes the ground, slowing any enemy within 2 squares of her. The attack allows her to knock an enemy prone and leave it dazed or

stunned. *Form of the avalanche unleashed* becomes the favored choice for her *guardian's attack*.

Weapon Expertise Polearms increases to a total of a +2 bonus to attack rolls.

Level 16: The *warden's refusal* power extends Kiel's earthshaking powers by allowing her to affect an enemy on that enemy's turn. As a feat, she chooses Mark of Warding (*Eberron Player's Guide*) because the additional penalty she imposes on her enemy's ability to hit anyone also helps keep her allies safe.

Level 17: *Warden's lure* replaces *stalker's positioning* and, when combined with her paragon path choice, turns a small temblor into a massive eruption.

Level 18: Again, ability score increases go to Strength and Constitution. The Durable feat helps Kiel survive the attention she draws to herself.

Level 19: One of Kiel's forms could be traded out for *thundering bolts or warding smash* if the need for extra damage comes up, but Kiel keeps her powers for now.

Level 20: Encounters are getting rough, and with the transition to epic fast approaching, Kiel opts for the Unyielding Stone feat to enhance her long-term survivability.

Status Report

On the cusp of epic power, Kiel's encounter and daily powers can knock enemies prone. Most of her powers cause the earth to shake over an area, and her utility powers allow her to focus her ire onto one enemy to toss it exactly where she needs that enemy to be. Kiel ranks about a 7.4 on the Richter scale now since she leaves a trail of devastation whenever she erupts. Only the sturdiest enemies remain standing when she's done.

Level 21: At epic level, the primal spirits reveal to Kiel that her great tie to the earth is more than a choice—it is destiny. As a Prison of the Winds, she is a living tomb for a primordial. Her deep grounding provides a solid barrier from which the winds cannot escape. She has already learned how to draw on that power to augment her seismic powers, but now the tie grows exponentially. Her Constitution and Dexterity are both greatly increased, both of her at-will powers deal more damage, and Toughness provides extra hit points As a feat, she takes Primal Resurgence, which allows her to use her most critical powers—her forms—more often.

SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY
24	STR Strength	18	DEX Dexterity	16	WIS Wisdom
23	CON Constitution	12	INT Intelligence	10	CHA Charisma

Level 22: Faced with trickier enemies and more flexible attacks, Kiel takes Robust Defenses as her next feat. *Renewal* grants her healing when she needs it and recharges a spent encounter power.

Level 23: *Primal rebuke* replaces *thunder ram assault*, and this new power keeps one enemy prone when it doesn't want to be, plus it deals great damage in the process.

Level 24: With the attacks that utilize heavy blades in her arsenal, Heavy Blade Mastery is a natural fit. Ability score increases go to Strength and Constitution. Kiel learns to draw on the primordial trapped within her. If defeated, she causes the ground to erupt anew, throwing everyone near her 7 squares away and knocking them prone. She also heals herself at the same time.

Level 25: *Form of the jungle lord replaces form of the stalwart mastodon.* This power is the ultimate form for Kiel, since it allows her to slide 3 and knock prone with every attack.

Level 26: The Second Skin feat gives Kiel significantly increased survivability, but if this feat fails her, once per day she can draw on the *fury of Huer-Ket* to push an enemy over 6 squares or knock it prone.

Level 27: Kiel's increasingly potent tie to the eternal prison is the perfect reason to have the *earth tomb* power replace *rumbling doom*, which can send an enemy out of the battle until the end of her next turn.

Level 28: When more and more foes are hurled outside the range of her mark, Kiel uses the Far-Reaching Grasp feat to extend that range and keep her enemies off balance out to 10 squares away. Ability score increases go to Strength and Constitution again.

Level 29: *Form of the unruly earth replaces form of the avalanche unleashed* to provide extreme control, locking down Kiel's enemies and making them nearly defenseless.

Level 30: The Epic Resurgence Feat brings back one of Kiel's encounter powers when it is needed most, and she learns to use the imprisoned primordial's nature against her foes by becoming insubstantial while bloodied.

Status Report

The final build for Kiel allows her to move foes around the field of combat with a great degree of impunity. Her reach weapon and those feats and powers that use the weapon help her maintain this level of control. In the end, those facing Kiel in combat might not end up where they started and frequently can't do what they wanted, which is exactly the effect Kiel's concept wanted to bring to the table. By keeping her foes off balance, as an earthquake can, Kiel allows her fellow adventurers to shine in their own ways.

SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY
26	STR Strength	18	DEX Dexterity	16	WIS Wisdom
25	CON Constitution	12	INT Intelligence	10	CHA Charisma

Racial Traits (Goliath)*: Mountain's Tenacity, Powerful Athlete.

At-Will Powers: *Warden's fury* (warden feature 1), *warden's grasp* (warden feature 1), *thorn strike (warden 1)*, *weight of earth* (warden 1).

Encounter Powers: *Stone's endurance* (goliath racial power), *leveraging strike* (polearm master 11), *warden's lure* (warden 17), *primal rebuke* (warden 23), *earth tomb* (warden 27).

Daily Powers: *Form of the fearsome ram* (warden 1), *polearm sweep* (polearm master 20), *form of the jungle lord* (warden 25), *form of the unruly earth* (warden 29).

Utility Powers: *Warden's tempest* (warden 2), *bear's endurance* (warden 6), *guardian's attack* (warden 10), *reaching stance* (polearm master 12), *warden's refusal* (warden 17), *renewal* (warden 22), *fury of Huer-Ket* (Prison of the Winds 26).

Feats: Battle Awareness, Durable, Epic Resurgence, Far-Reaching Grasp, Goliath Greatweapon Prowess, Heavy Blade Mastery, Heavy Blade Opportunity, Impaling Thrust, Mark of Warding, Polearm Gamble, Polearm Momentum, Primal Resurgence, Robust Defenses, Second Skin, Spear Push, Toughness, Unyielding Stone, Weapon Expertise (polearms).

Features*: Font of Life (warden 1), Guardian Might (warden 1), Nature's Wrath (warden 1), Forceful Reach (polearm master 11), Lunging Action (polearm master 11), Longarm Grasp (polearm master 16), Essence of Heur-Ket (Prison of the Winds 21), Storm Surge (Prison of the Winds 24), Storm Form (Prison of the Winds 30).

*Powers show up in the relevant categories above.

Desired Magic Items: Kiel's ideal choices combine the needs of the defender for maximum survivability with that of the controller for manipulating foes. A *controlling glaive* might be the ideal weapon because it turns pushes into slides and adds more distance. Any item that increases hit points or healing surge value might be appreciated greatly, such as the *cloak of the walking wounded*, the *brooch of vitality*, and *lifeblood* armor. With her extraordinary Strength, the *belt of mountain endurance* is not only thematically appropriate but hugely beneficial. *Iron armbands of power* are an excellent choice, especially after paragon tier when opportunity attacks use at-will powers instead of melee basic attacks. Several of the new primal items match the theme well: *Boar tusk helm* and *gorilla gloves* allow an extra push and prone effect per day.

References Listing

The following table provides you with the books you can reference for powers, feats, and features. The table includes references for powers and feats that were retrained or replaced.

Racial Traits (Goliath)*	
Mountain's Tenacity	*Player's Handbook 2*
Powerful Athlete	*Player's Handbook 2*

At-Will Powers	
warden's fury (warden feature 1)	*Player's Handbook 2*
warden's grasp (warden feature 1)	*Player's Handbook 2*
thorn strike (warden 1)	*Player's Handbook 2*
weight of earth (warden 1)	*Player's Handbook 2*

Encounter Powers	
stone's endurance (goliath racial power)	*Player's Handbook 2*
thunder ram assault (warden 1)	*Player's Handbook 2*
guardian shock wave (warden 3)	*Primal Power*
stalker's positioning (warden 7)	*Player's Handbook 2*
leveraging strike (polearm master 11)	*Martial Power*
rumbling doom (warden 13)	*Primal Power*
warden's lure (warden 17)	*Primal Power*
primal rebuke (warden 23)	*Primal Power*
earth tomb (warden 27)	*Player's Handbook 2*

Daily Powers	
form of the fearsome ram (warden 1)	*Player's Handbook 2*
storm strike (warden 5)	*Player's Handbook 2*
form of the stalwart mastodon (warden 9)	*Primal Power*
form of the avalanche unleashed (warden 15)	*Primal Power*
polearm sweep (polearm master 20)	*Martial Power*
form of the jungle lord (warden 25)	*Player's Handbook 2*
form of the unruly earth (warden 29)	*Primal Power*

Utility Powers	
warden's tempest (warden 2)	*Primal Power*
bear's endurance (warden 6)	*Player's Handbook 2*
guardian's attack (warden 10)	*Primal Power*
reaching stance (polearm master 12)	*Martial Power*
warden's refusal (warden 17)	*Primal Power*
renewal (warden 22)	*Player's Handbook 2*
fury of Huer-Ket (Prison of the Winds 26)	*Dragon Magazine* 371

Feats	
Sudden Roots	*Player's Handbook 2*
Battle Awareness	*Martial Power*
Durable	*Player's Handbook*
Epic Resurgence	*Player's Handbook*
Far-Reaching Grasp	*Primal Power*
Goliath Greatweapon Prowess	*Player's Handbook 2*
Heavy Blade Mastery	*Player's Handbook*
Heavy Blade Opportunity	*Player's Handbook*
Impaling Thrust	*Primal Power*
Mark of Warding	*Eberron Player's Guide*
Polearm Gamble	*Player's Handbook*
Polearm Momentum	*Martial Power*
Primal Resurgence	*Player's Handbook 2*
Robust Defenses	*Player's Handbook 2*
Second Skin	*Primal Power*
Spear Push	*Player's Handbook*
Toughness	*Player's Handbook*
Unyielding Stone	*Player's Handbook 2*
Weapon Expertise (polearms)	*Player's Handbook 2*

Features*	
Font of Life (warden 1)	*Player's Handbook 2*
Guardian Might (warden 1)	*Player's Handbook 2*
Nature's Wrath (warden 1)	*Player's Handbook 2*
Forceful Reach (polearm master 11)	*Martial Power*
Lunging Action (polearm master 11)	*Martial Power*
Longarm Grasp (polearm master 16)	*Martial Power*
Essence of Heur-Ket (Prison of the Winds 21)	*Dragon Magazine* 371
Storm Surge (Prison of the Winds 24)	*Dragon Magazine* 371
Storm Form) (Prison of the Winds 30	*Dragon Magazine* 371

Magic Items	
controlling weapon	*Adventurer's Vault*
cloak of the walking wounded	*Adventurer's Vault*
brooch of vitality	*Adventurer's Vault*
lifeblood armor	*Player's Handbook 2*
dwarven armor	Player's Handbook
belt of mountain endurance	*Dragon Magazine* 365
iron armbands of power	*Adventurer's Vault*
boar tusk helm	*Dragon Magazine* 378
gorilla gloves	*Dragon Magazine* 378

*Powers show up in the relevant categories above.

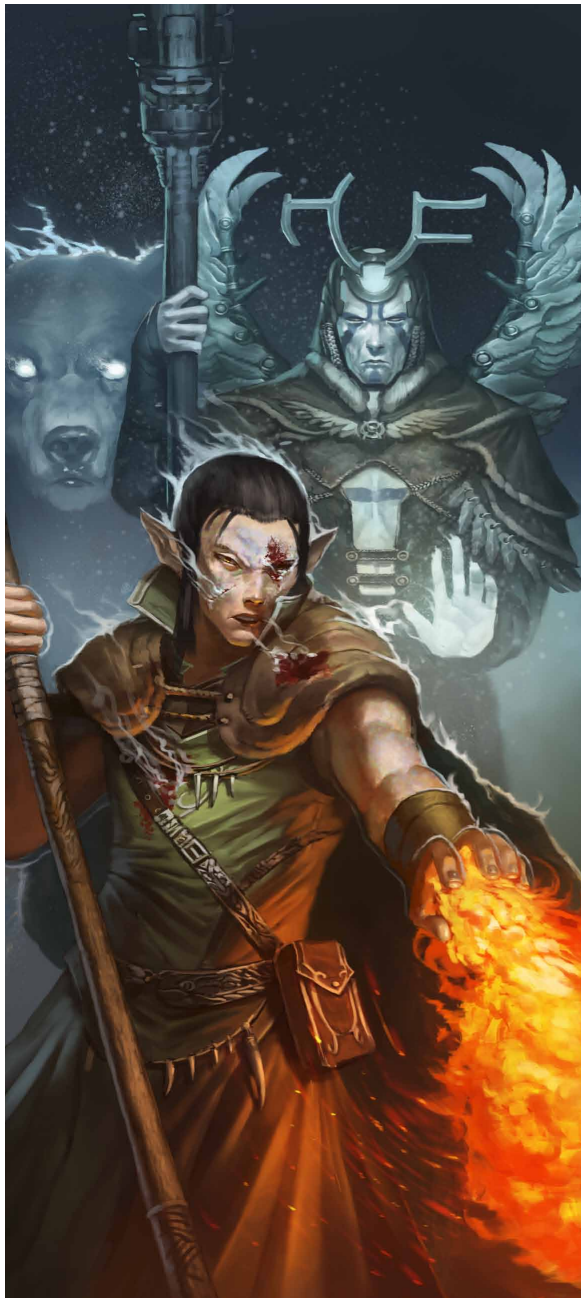
Rasa, the Spirit of Life Incarnate

All primal power is tied to the concept of primal spirits, which are living beings that embody aspects of nature such as a living storm or a great ancestor. Through the primal spirits, a shaman draws on this wellspring of life energy to empower allies to accomplish feats of heroism that would otherwise be impossible. Like an engine running on pure life energy, the shaman pushes the party to greater and greater success.

Rasa is a deva who has given himself to the primal spirits eternally. His body serves as a tool for the spirits to communicate with the world and a conduit for their power. Although the power of life gives immense healing, leaders know that their role is far broader, and Rasa seeks to enhance the activities of those in his care. His abilities allow him to aid their skill checks, and he can ward them from harm and help them travel. Life is about action, and action is best when it brings fulfillment. Rasa sees exhaustion and injury as tools of death, and he guides his wards so that they can stave off exhaustion as long as possible and live each day to its fullest.

Race

Many races make good shamans precisely because the class is so versatile. Humans are arguably the most versatile race, and they make solid shamans. Wisdom is required of any shaman, and as a result dwarves make fine shamans, as do shifters. The half-elf race works well with both the shaman and the concept of a leader who empowers the whole party at all times. However, Rasa ends up being a deva



because the eternally reborn aspect allows him to be an eternal embodiment of life's bounty. The Intelligence bonus allows great flexibility in his build, and the racial power combines excellently with the shaman's *speak with spirits* power, as well as perfectly representing the "don't stop now" attitude.

Class

Only two possibilities work well for Rasa's concept: artificer and shaman. Artificers are tempting both due to their ability to keep the party going after one character runs out of healing surges and also because of the way they provide so many flexible abilities. However, the shaman has the greatest potential to heal without consuming surges, and right from 1st level a shaman has tools to overcome nearly any obstruction in the form of the *speak with spirits* power.

Ability Scores

One can make an argument to have a shaman to wear chainmail because otherwise the shaman has the lowest defenses of any leader. However, Rasa isn't a warrior. Additionally, the heart pumps energy through the body, and the ribcage protects it—Rasa doesn't want anything to do the ribcage's job for it. His high Intelligence and careful positioning should be protection enough for his needs (or so the concept goes). Wisdom and Constitution are the crucial abilities, with Intelligence coming in third, so Rasa looks like this:

Score	Ability	Score	Ability	Score	Ability
8	STR Strength	10	DEX Dexterity	18*	WIS Wisdom
16	CON Constitution	14*	INT Intelligence	12	CHA Charisma

* Bonuses for race included.

Skills

Heal allows Rasa to grant his allies saving throws at critical moments, and he can use it later for important rituals. Nature is mandatory but extremely useful. Endurance is chosen because Rasa can't be the weakest link for his own party. Last is Perception so that he has a better chance of knowing the full story behind whatever he might be investigating at the time.

Feats

Although the Mark of Healing is tempting (and it would free up a skill slot) at 1st level, few killer save-ends effects probably come up during game play early in Rasa's career. As a result, Rasa has the Protector Spirit Adept feat to give a bonus to defenses in an area around his spirit companion.

Powers

Shamans come with the Companion Spirit feature, and Rasa ends up with the protector Spirit Boon feature since it more properly represents the concept's goals. The best part of this particular feature is how his allies' second winds can gain a bonus without him needing to take an action. He also has *protecting strike*. For his second at-will he contemplates *wrath of winter* for its ability to reposition his spirit companion and its high damage, but instead he goes with *defending strike*. The choice of encounter power is between *certain threat* and *thunder bear's warding*, and Rasa selects the latter for its ability to protect multiple parts of a battlefield (resistance near the ally and temporary hit points near Rasa). His daily power is *spirit of the healing flood* since it is perfectly in theme and extremely powerful as well. Shamans have *speak with spirits*, and each has two uses of *healing spirit* per encounter.

Level 2: Because Healing Spirit heals two separate characters, one limitation Rasa faces is how to overcome a damage spike, such as when one character is hit with a critical. *Bonds of the clan* can split the damage to two people and keep the victim in the fray. However, he can combine the other option that works with his concept, *spirit of life*, with *healing spirit*, because it does not consume a healing surge. Rasa's build ends up with *spirit of life* for his first utility power.

Rasa takes Implement Expertise (totem) as his next feat because most of his key powers require a successful attack roll for the bonus to come into play.

Level 3: *Spring renewal strike* works both because it deals out a high amount of damage and it allows healing with a bonus.

Level 4: Rasa raises his Charisma and Wisdom. Thanks to his newly raised Charisma, he qualifies for the Bardic Dilettante feat, granting him training in one skill (he chooses History). Once per day, he gains access to the bard's *majestic word* power, which allows a big heal on one character when needed.

Level 5: *Spirit of the hawk's wind* becomes Rasa's first zone effect. The blinded enemy deals reduced damage, and the ability for his whole party to ignore difficult terrain and shift 4 can turn the tide of a battle and possibly nullify a major obstruction.

Level 6: His second utility power is *spirit of the keeper*, both for the additional healing power that doesn't rely on being near his spirit companion, and because of the secondary effect that can prevent huge amounts of damage, or other nasty effects, when facing skirmishers and lurkers. For his feat, Rasa takes Mark of Healing, which allows allies to make saving throws when healed and grants access to rituals.

Level 7: *Winter wind spirit* is a no-brainer at this level because as a protector spirit, Rasa can grant an ally a +6 bonus to AC when needed.

Level 8: Ability score increases go into Wisdom and Constitution. Rasa takes the Spirit Tribe feat so that whenever he needs to use *speak with spirits* to overcome a problem, his allies can gain part of the benefit as well.

Level 9: *Spirit of autumn's reaping* is a powerful attack that grants free healing to the whole party and, if timed properly, the vulnerable 5 effect he imposes on the enemy can allow the party to take that foe out of the fight swiftly.

Level 10: Rasa takes the Bardic Ritualist feat, selecting Animal Messenger and Traveler's Chant, both of which allow him to infuse his allies with spiritual power to make them better at what they already do. He gains training in Arcana with this feat as well. *Sacrificial spirit* is the obvious choice for his utility power, with its ability to restore a healing surge to every party member adjacent to his spirit companion.

Status Report

As an embodiment of life's power and energy, Rasa can imbue his allies with 3 temporary hit points at will, he can augment his ability to call on healing spirits with a *spring renewal strike* and *spirit of the keeper*, and daily he can use *majestic word*, grant regeneration to his allies, heal one person without consuming a surge, and give a small bit of healing from the *spirit of autumn's reaping*. He can negate difficult terrain for an entire encounter, give a bonus to any skill to his allies once per encounter, and replenish a healing surge to everyone near his spirit companion to overcome their exhaustion and push them a little further.

Level 11: Rasa selects the scarred healer as his paragon path. This paragon path greatly magnifies his ability to push his allies' endurance since every bonus the path provides comes with "surgeless" healing. Each of Rasa's action points grants 10 temporary hit points to an ally, and any time an ally is healed adjacent to his companion, that ally regains an additional 4 hit points. *Sharing the kill* is a high-damage attack that grants healing to allies near his spirit companion. Although Nimble Spirit is extremely tempting, Rasa again dips into the bard and takes Disheartening Presence for the synergy with *protector spirit adept*, which allows him to provide bonuses to his allies with his spirit companion and give a penalty to bloodied enemies who are near him.

After gaining +1 to ability scores, his totals look like this:

SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY
9	STR Strength	11	DEX Dexterity	21	WIS Wisdom
18	CON Constitution	15	INT Intelligence	14	CHA Charisma

Level 12: The *spirit's touch* utility power from Rasa's paragon path shields an ally who was struck from further damage and allows a bonus to saving throws. Rasa also takes Nimble Spirit to ensure his spirit companion is where he needs it to be.

Level 13: *Hungry spirit* replaces *thunder bear's warding* for bonus damage and the ability to heal without consuming a surge.

Level 14: Spirit Speaker allows Rasa to grant his hefty speak with spirits bonus to any ally, while still granting the reduced bonus to other allies. Ability score increases go into Wisdom and Constitution.

Level 15: Two main choices at this level support Rasa's concept. *Tree father's bounty* deals huge damage to enemies and allows an area of bonus defense and

maneuverability to allies. *Reparative spirit* grants ongoing protection at the end of every round to whichever character needs it most. Both are powerful and flexible. Rasa chooses *tree father's bounty* to replace the *spirit of autumn's reaping*, since the burst of growth and protection combined with maneuverability is a bit more flexible and lively.

Level 16: *Forge the chains of life* is an iconic power for Rasa because it shows life's triumph over death and it provides double a healing surge in healing without consuming a surge. However *healing howl* heals each ally near his spirit companion as if he or she had spent a healing surge and would be a great option as well. Rasa ends up with *forge the chains of life*, though. He also learns to channel the power of the healing spirits farther and farther from his spirit companion thanks to the Shared Healing Spirit feat. The feat perfectly reflects his new Healing Paths ability, which grants him Wisdom bonus (+6) to any ally near him or his spirit companion who spends a healing surge.

Level 17: *Spirit of spring's renewal* is a straight upgrade for *spring renewal strike*, showing how much Rasa's powers of life have grown.

Level 18: Rasa increases his Constitution and Wisdom again, and several options exist for feats at this level. Toughness and Durable both represent an increase in his life energy, and Jack of All Trades or Bardic Training can give him increased skill modifiers in a variety of circumstances. Rasa goes with Jack of All Trades for the maximized flexibility.

Level 19: *Spirit of the healing flood* is being outgrown by the party's hit point totals, and Rasa looks to either *tree father's ward* or *wind of death and mercy* as a replacement. *Ancestor's drum* is not an option since it consumes healing surges. Rasa takes *tree father's ward* because the –4 penalty to attack rolls can be as powerful as the healing.

Level 20: Durable gives two more healing surges and increases his ability to fight back against death and exhaustion. *The burning dance* provides great healing to the party free from the use of healing surges.

Status Report

As his power and relationship with the primal spirits grows, Rasa has added a number of new ways to heal without consuming healing surges, as well as ways to overcome different obstructions. He has augmented his small bonus to every ally with an additional big bonus to one ally. *Tree father's bounty* can be defensive or offensive (or both), as can summoning his spirit companion as a free action. His worst skills can be augmented by his enormous Wisdom bonus, Jack of All Trades, and the 1d6 from his racial power as needed. He is truly prepared for any encounter and ensures that his whole team is as well.

Level 21: Rasa learns that in binding himself to the primal spirits instead of the gods, he has tied himself to the great World Tree and his epic destiny is to become its guardian and a tireless protector of the whole world as a result. Thanks to the World Tree Guardian epic destiny, he gains the ability to throw off damage as soon as an enemy strikes him. Additionally, pure life energy spills out of Rasa's spirit companion in a widening flood, since the Mighty Spirit feat pushes the bonuses he grants out 2 squares instead of only 1.

After gaining +1 to ability scores his totals look like this:

SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY
10	STR Strength	12	DEX Dexterity	24	WIS Wisdom
21	CON Constitution	16	INT Intelligence	15	CHA Charisma

Level 22: Few powers say "Death? Not today!" quite as effectively as *call the dead*. Not only does this power revive the whole party, but by pushing back failed death saving throws, Rasa's increasing ability to channel the spirits of life has given him the power to break one of the most severe limits on a single day's activities. Primal Resurgence adds another broken limit as he regains the use of an expended daily power.

Level 23: *Call to the primal protector* replaces the venerable *winter wind spirit*, granting protection to allies within 2 squares of his spirit companion.

Level 24: Again, Rasa's Wisdom and Constitution grow. Continuing the theme of endless endurance, Rasa takes Epic Resurgence. The World Tree grants him the ability to die in place of an ally, which not only banishes death, but provides three free healing surges' worth of healing to the party overall and regeneration on top of that.

Level 25: It's a real tough decision to choose from among *ironborn spirit*, *peacemaker's lodge*, or *Stormhawk's gambit*. In some settings, *peacemaker's lodge* would win out with its ability to daze multiple enemies, but the group flight offered by *Stormhawk's gambit* is a powerful upgrade to his *spirit of hawk's wind* with its benefit not just in combat, but also in overcoming other obstructions (walls, pits, difficult or dangerous terrain, to name a few). This latter power is too useful to pass up.

Level 26: Again, Rasa learns to grant more boons to his allies since the Invigorating Spirit feat lets his allies shift when he uses *healing spirit*. The *boughs of*

the World Tree utility power is a flexible tool, providing a bonus to offense, defense, or temporary hit points as the situation demands.

Level 27: Rasa gains the ability to imbue his allies with his own boundless endurance in the form of keeping their encounter powers thanks to *spirit of elder wisdom*. In return he lets go of *hungry spirit*.

Level 28: One last time, Rasa's Wisdom and Constitution grow. Rasa imbues his spirit companion with the ability to shield unconscious and dying allies, staving off death again and again through the Guardian Spirit feat.

Level 29: Nearly at the apex of his power, Rasa releases *tree father's bounty* and learns to call *spiritblood vines*. These vines deal tremendous damage and potentially allow allies to regain up to 80 hit points without consuming surges, or they can allow four allies to spend surges. *Spirits of mist*, another solid choice, makes allies insubstantial until end of encounter within a zone that doesn't need to be maintained. He goes with *spiritblood vines*.

Level 30: Rasa's final boon from the World Tree is the ability to regenerate, and his last feat is Strengthening Spirit, which gives allies adjacent to his spirit companion temporary hit points each time he calls on the healing spirits.

Status Report

Rasa's *speak with spirits* grants a bonus to him and his allies. Each day, he can grant hundreds of points of healing that don't require surges, and he can restore both surges and encounter powers to his party. He has powers that can nullify difficult terrain or flanking enemies. He can grant temporary hit points to his party or heal with nearly every action, and he can bring himself or his allies back from the dead multiple times per day. He can push back failed death saving throws. With Rasa nearby, life can be eternal.

SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY	SCORE	ABILITY
10	STR Strength	12	DEX Dexterity	26	WIS Wisdom
23	CON Constitution	16	INT Intelligence	15	CHA Charisma

Racial Traits (Deva)*: Astral Majesty, Astral Resistance, Immortal Origin.

At-Will Powers: *Call spirit companion* (shaman 1), *protecting strike* (shaman 1), *spirit's shield* (shaman 1), *defending strike* (shaman 1).

Encounter Powers: *Memory of a thousand lifetimes* (deva racial power), *healing spirit* (shaman 1), *speak with spirits* (shaman 1), *sharing the kill* (scarred healer 11), *spirit of spring's renewal* (shaman 17), *call to the primal protector* (shaman 23), *spirit of elder wisdom* (shaman 27).

Daily Powers: *Tree father's ward* (shaman 19), *the burning dance* (scarred healer 20), *Stormhawk's gambit* (shaman 25), *spiritblood vines* (shaman 29).

Utility Powers: *Spirit of life* (shaman 2), *spirit of the keeper* (shaman 6), *sacrificial spirit* (shaman 10), *spirit's touch* (scarred healer 12), *forge the chains of life* (shaman 16), *call the dead* (shaman 22), *boughs of the World Tree* (World Tree Guardian 26).

Feats: Bardic Dilettante, Bardic Ritualist, Disheartening Presence, Durable, Epic Resurgence, Guardian Spirit, Implement Expertise (totem), Invigorating Spirit, Jack of All Trades, Mark of Healing, Mighty Spirit, Nimble Spirit, Primal Resurgence, Protector Spirit Adept, Shared Healing Spirit, Spirit Speaker, Spirit Tribe, Strengthening Spirit.

Features*: Spirit Boon (shaman 1), Scar's Gift (scarred healer 11), Scarred Healer Action (scarred healer 11), Healing Paths (scarred healer 16), Bark of the World Tree (World Tree Guardian 21), Boon of the World Tree (World Tree Guardian 24), World Tree's Growth (World Tree Guardian 30).

*Powers show up in the relevant categories above.

Desired Magic Items: Rasa's ideal choices must enhance his healing and buffing, while also ensuring that he can survive, too. *Bear spirit armor* is his top choice when it comes to protecting the whole party. The *hungry spirits totem* does the best job of increasing his abilities, though the *spring renewal totem* is a reasonable alternative for his character concept. Both *goblin stompers* and *phantom chaussures* are good options if Rasa needs extra protection, and *oceanstrider boots, thornwalker slippers,* or *wallwalkers* add another way to circumvent obstructions. *Gloves of the healer* are an obvious choice, though *antipathy gloves* can provide powerful protection to allies when used at the right times, especially after paragon tier when Rasa's spirit companion creates difficult terrain for enemies. The *factotum helm* is a wonderful addition to Rasa's repertoire of flexible skills, until an *Ioun stone of perfect language* becomes available. A *battle standard of healing* complements Rasa's healing powers.

References Listing

The following table provides you with the books you can reference for powers, feats, and features. The table includes references for powers and feats that were retrained or replaced.

Racial Traits (Deva)*	
Astral Majesty	*Player's Handbook 2*
Astral Resistance	*Player's Handbook 2*
Immortal Origin	*Player's Handbook 2*

At-Will Powers	
Call spirit companion (shaman 1)	*Player's Handbook 2*
protecting strike (shaman 1)	*Player's Handbook 2*
spirit's shield (shaman 1)	*Player's Handbook 2*
defending strike (shaman 1)	*Player's Handbook 2*

Encounter Powers	
memory of a thousand lifetimes (deva racial power)	*Player's Handbook 2*
healing spirit (shaman 1)	*Player's Handbook 2*
speak with spirits (shaman 1)	*Player's Handbook 2*
thunder bear's warding (shaman 1)	*Player's Handbook 2*
spring renewal strike (shaman 3)	*Player's Handbook 2*
winter wind spirit (shaman 7)	*Player's Handbook 2*
sharing the kill (scarred healer 11)	*Primal Power*
hungry spirit (shaman 13)	*Primal Power*
spirit of spring's renewal (shaman 17)	*Player's Handbook 2*
call to the primal protector (shaman 23)	*Player's Handbook 2*
spirit of elder wisdom (shaman 27)	*Player's Handbook 2*

Daily Powers	
spirit of the healing flood (shaman 1)	*Player's Handbook 2*
spirit of the hawk's wind (shaman 5)	*Player's Handbook 2*
spirit of autumn's reaping (shaman 9)	*Player's Handbook 2*
tree father's bounty (shaman 15)	*Primal Power*
tree father's ward (shaman 19)	*Primal Power*
the burning dance (scarred healer 20)	*Primal Power*
Stormhawk's gambit (shaman 25)	*Primal Power*
spiritblood vines (shaman 29)	*Primal Power*

Utility Powers	
spirit of life (shaman 2)	*Player's Handbook 2*
spirit of the keeper (shaman 6)	*Player's Handbook 2*
sacrificial spirit (shaman 10)	*Dragon Magazine* 372
spirit's touch (scarred healer 12)	*Primal Power*
forge the chains of life (shaman 16)	*Player's Handbook 2*
call the dead (shaman 22)	*Player's Handbook 2*
boughs of the World Tree (World Tree Guardian 26)	*Primal Power*

Feats	
Bardic Dilettante	*Player's Handbook 2*
Bardic Ritualist	*Arcane Power*
Disheartening Presence	*Arcane Power*
Durable	*Player's Handbook*
Epic Resurgence	*Player's Handbook*
Guardian Spirit	*Player's Handbook 2*
Implement Expertise (totem)	*Player's Handbook 2*
Invigorating Spirit	*Primal Power*
Jack of All Trades	*Player's Handbook*
Mark of Healing	*Eberron Player's Guide*
Mighty Spirit	*Player's Handbook 2*
Nimble Spirit	*Player's Handbook 2*
Primal Resurgence	*Player's Handbook 2*
Protector Spirit Adept	*Player's Handbook 2*
Shared Healing Spirit	*Player's Handbook 2*
Spirit Speaker	*Player's Handbook 2*
Spirit Tribe	*Primal Power*
Strengthening Spirit	*Primal Power*

Features*	
Spirit Boon (shaman 1)	*Player's Handbook 2*
Scar's Gift (scarred healer 11)	*Primal Power*
Scarred Healer Action (scarred healer 11)	*Primal Power*
Healing Paths (scarred healer 16)	*Primal Power*
Bark of the World Tree (World Tree Guardian 21)	*Primal Power*
Boon of the World Tree (World Tree Guardian 24)	*Primal Power*
World Tree's Growth (World Tree Guardian 30)	*Primal Power*

Magic Items	
bear spirit armor	*Player's Handbook 2*
hungry spirits totem	*Player's Handbook 2*
spring renewal totem	*Player's Handbook*
goblin stompers	*Adventurer's Vault*
phantom chaussures	Adventurer's Vault
oceanstrider boots	*Adventurer's Vault*
thornwalker slippers	*Adventurer's Vault*
wallwalkers	*Adventurer's Vault*
gloves of the healer	*Adventurer's Vault*
antipathy gloves	*Adventurer's Vault*
factotum helm	*Adventurer's Vault*
Ioun stone of perfect language	*Adventurer's Vault*
battle standard of healing	*Adventurer's Vault*

*Powers show up in the relevant categories above.

About the Author

John Zamarra works as a freelance writer, and copyeditor for numerous game publishers, though this is his first *D&D Insider* article. He has been playing Dungeons & Dragons® for over 20 years, and he secretly holds out hope that one day there will be a 4th Edition version of the Immortal Level rules.

Channel Divinity: The Raven Queen's Champions

By Robert J. Schwalb
Illustrations by Kieran Yanner

Death comes for all. No one is immune to its caress. Age, disease, misfortune, and war claim the living with no regard for the individual's unfulfilled goals or unachieved dreams. Mortals fear death, but not just for the pain or loss it entails. They fear it for the unknown.

Philosophers and theologians alike have wrestled with death for far longer than any can remember, and all they have to show for their relentless study is conjecture and myth. What they think they know is that death is a transformation—an awakening of the soul and its release. Most souls wriggle free from their bodies, escaping the decaying meat to make a journey to whatever fate has in store for each of them. Ancient tales speak of the Underworld, a vast, yawning realm where souls become entrapped and the fetid waters bounding the realm erase their memories. Others suggest souls enter the gods' dominions, where they reside for eternity in the blessed presence of their perfect masters.

Planar travelers and the wise alike know the destination awaiting the newly dead is none other than the Shadowfell. There, the soul must pass beneath the Raven Queen's cold and hungry gaze to move on from

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this reality to the next. And beyond that? None can say for certain.

Priests assure their flocks that those who live upstanding and virtuous lives find that what happens after their deaths is free from danger, but their words ring hollow. Not even they know if what they say is true or not. Indeed, many perils await the dead. Dark, hungry things wait in shadows, luring unwary travelers to their dooms, where they are used, twisted, or corrupted into frightful undead horrors. Others harvest souls for the energy their luminous forms contain.

Knowing, or at least sensing, the danger causes mortals to turn their eyes to their deaths with fear and loathing. They might believe that the road ahead does not end in bliss but in possible hardship and awful suffering. Unable to meet this doom with anything more than fear, a few bury their misgivings beneath whatever faith the local vicar can foster in his or her sermons. Many remain dubious, wondering why the world works as it does, who is responsible for safeguarding these souls, and why more is not done to protect them. Few find the answers they seek, but all can agree the path to wisdom, at least in regard to matters of death and fate, runs through the Raven Queen.

Serving the Raven Queen

Death, fate, and winter—each is a grim subject and none have the appeal offered or glory promised by service to other gods. The Raven Queen gives little to her followers, promising no ease from the worry and giving no answers to the looming questions about life or death. Yet people seek her out. Some feel drawn to her service to find answers to dark questions, others find respite from the death's imminence or intercession where fate would hold sway, and still others seek comfort in winter's bitter chill.

Backgrounds

Adventurers have an uncommon connection to death. Throughout their careers, they send souls by the hundreds to the Shadowfell. They might have even felt death's unwelcome embrace from time to time, standing at its door or going through it only to be snatched free by a timely ritual or prayer. If you choose the Raven Queen as your patron deity, consider carefully why you made this choice. It might be enough to pledge service to the deity because she's appealing in a gothic sort of way, but having a reason beyond dark clothing and corpse paint will provide a far more rewarding experience.

The following backgrounds supplement those found in *Player's Handbook 2* and *Divine Power,* representing a few options particular to serving the Raven Queen. You can choose from them when selecting your background elements.

After choosing all background elements, you can (with your DM's consent) select one of the following background benefits.

- Gain a +2 bonus to checks with a skill associated with your background.
- Add a skill associated with your background to your class's skills list before you choose your trained skills.
- Choose one language connected to your background. You can speak, read, and write that language fluently.
- If you are using a campaign setting that offers regional benefits (such as the Forgotten Realms® setting), gain a regional benefit.

Occupation

Embalmer: You prepared corpses for burial, removing organs and fluids to preserve them against rot. Was this an acceptable profession in your community? Were you an outsider for your "unclean" occupation? Did you enjoy your work? Did you ever prepare the corpse of someone famous?

Associated Skills: Heal, Nature

Grave Digger: You dug graves and prepared gravesites for the funerary rites. How did you see your profession? Did you ever experience anything strange? How did your occupation lead you to the Raven Queen?

Associated Skills: Athletics, Endurance

Seer: You peered through time's veil to perceive the future and learn the fates of those around you. Were you a fake, or did you have a genuine talent? If the latter, how do your visions manifest? Choosing this background does not let you consistently perceive the future, but it does provide the DM with a tool for starting adventures and as a way to feed you information you might have missed.

Associated Skills: Arcana, Bluff

Surgeon: You used advanced healing techniques to help the sick and dying. Were you a bonesaw, hacking off limbs to save soldiers' lives, or did you pursue a private line of work, attending to those with the courage and coin to enlist your services? How did your community regard your work? To learn your trade, did you steal corpses? Did you have a sponsor to supply you materials? Why did you leave this trade and abandon science for religion?

Associated Skills: Heal, Nature

Tomb Robber: You survived by plundering tombs and graves, disturbing the dead to steal their treasures. Did you work alone or were you part of a group? From your experiences, are you now squeamish around corpses or dismissive? What about rats and other vermin? Did you ever encounter undead? How do you feel about your past now?

Associated Skills: Stealth, Thievery

Psychology

Bereaved: You lost someone close to you and his or her death haunts you still. Who was this person and how did they fit into your life? Aside from this person's absence, how did his or her death shape your identity? Do you hope to find the lost one's soul through service to the Raven Queen? Do you hope to revive the person or is it too late? Did unusual circumstances surround this death?

Associated Skills: Insight, Religion

Deviant: You have an unwholesome or unhealthy interest in the dead. What, exactly, was your interest? Did you experiment with necromancy? Steal corpses? What did you do with them when you got them? Does this interest remain or have you overcome it?

Associated Skills: Intimidate, Stealth

Raised: You died and were restored to life. What were the circumstances of your death? Who raised you? Why did you come back? Do you recall anything from the time you spent dead? How did this event shape your religious views?

Associated Skills: Intimidate, Religion

Revenant Racial Backgrounds

Ancient: When you awoke as a revenant, you discovered centuries had passed. Everyone you knew, loved, and hated is now gone. Why did the Raven Queen call you from death? Do you have special knowledge? How do you see the world now? How do you look at the years you lost?

Associated Skills: Endurance, History

Cursed: A necromancer or dark priest cursed you with undeath, preventing you from ever knowing the peace you earned. Trapped between two worlds, do you embrace your fate as a revenant or do you despise it? Do you conceal your unsettling appearance or wear it with pride?

Associated Skills: Intimidate, Stealth

Pact: You forged a pact with the Raven Queen when you lived, promising to serve her in death in exchange for a benefit in life. She fulfilled her bargain and now it's time to live up to yours. What does she expect you to do? What mission must you fulfill before you earn your true death?

Associated Skills: History, Religion

Vengeance: In the final moments before you died, you witnessed a terrible act—an experience so profound that death could not claim you. Who wronged you and why? Were you murdered? Was a loved one harmed to get at you? How will you achieve the vengeance you desire? What will happen once you get it?

Associated Skills: Endurance, Intimidate

Shadar-Kai Racial Backgrounds

Ennui: Plagued with the pervasive despair characterizing the Shadowfell, you fill the hole in your heart with service to the Raven Queen. How do you feel about the Raven Queen? In her service, what do you do to escape the dissolution awaiting you should you give into your melancholy?

Associated Skills: Athletics, Religion

Salvation: All shadar-kai face oblivion, because that is the price exacted by the Raven Queen for being spared age and its infirmities. What do you think the Raven Queen will grant you by serving her? Do you want to escape the oblivion altogether or just forestall it? Do you hope to be chosen to serve as her sorrowsworn? Do you resent the deity?

Associated Skills: Intimidate, Religion

Three Faces

The Raven Queen's portfolio includes death, fate, and winter. Understanding how these aspects relate to the deity provides keen insight into what it means to serve her and what she expects in return for the power she bestows.

Death

It is the unknown that sows fear in mortal hearts. Is there life after the grave? Is there peace or salvation—maybe a chance to live again? Or is there only annihilation's uncaring embrace, where oblivion's ravenous appetite erases all deeds, experiences, hopes, and fears?

Most know the Raven Queen as the god of death and the guardian of souls as they exit the world to make their final journey into the unknown. She embodies

the life cycle, and myths about her demonstrate the trials all mortals must endure in their existence. The Raven Queen lived, died, and was reborn as something greater than she once was. Mortals who follow the Raven Queen often believe her story highlights the struggles they all must face, and should they be found worthy, they might live again.

In her death aspect, the Raven Queen expects her servants to respect death's claim and not to interfere with those who are dying. Death is a natural process and when the individual's fate beckons, none should stand in its path. Most who serve the Raven Queen let the dead stay dead and never employ the Raise Dead ritual without sufficient cause. Even when they do, they demand another life to replace the one restored.

Fate

Your life is but one of many threads in existence's tapestry. All have roles to play in the world's shaping, but each has a purpose that helps define the larger pattern. The Raven Queen does not so much cut your thread, but she identifies when your life has served its purpose. When she calls, go not in fear but in satisfaction that you have achieved what you were meant to achieve.

The Raven Queen does not decide how a mortal's life goes, but rather observes the world and its developments on a grand scale. As the Lady of Fate, she identifies the moments when death marks a fitting end or serves as a catalyst to goad others to carry on in the deceased's name. When the mortal dies, the Raven Queen guides the soul to her palace Letherna, where she ushers the dead through to the beyond. She has the power to intercede on a mortal's behalf—to forestall death or quicken it as she decides—but she reserves such gifts for those worthy of her intervention.

The Raven Queen despises most undead, though she has used them from time to time, and she instructs her servants to destroy them wherever they encounter these abominations. Undead pervert the natural order, denying fate its power. Their destruction ensures the proper balance is restored. This intolerance extends to any who exploit death for personal ends. Orcus, Vecna, and to a lesser extent Zehir have earned her enmity.

Winter

Usher in the season of death by accepting its frigid embrace.

Winter is often overlooked in discussions about the Raven Queen and is included as an afterthought or a symbolic manifestation of her influence over the natural world. Although her role as patron of death and fate eclipse her winter aspect, winter is key to understanding her and what she expects. Winter is the season of death. Plants wither and die, animals fade, and the world waits for the seasons to turn so life can begin again. The Raven Queen might be at her strongest in the winter, but even she recognizes it must not last forever because it is only one part of life's natural cycle.

Omens and Signs

People identify the Raven Queen in many signs and symbols. The raven, naturally, is her favored animal, and these birds feature prominently in rites and ceremonies dedicated to the deity. To kill a raven invites the deity's wrath because they are her beloved creatures and act as her eyes and ears in the natural world.

In addition to the raven, the Lady of Fate also inherited symbols associated with her predecessor, Nerull. Skulls are ubiquitous in her temples and shrines. They decorate the doors and exterior walls, serve as altars, and are worked into arms and armor used by her divine knights. Such grim visages remind people of how fleeting life is.

Three is an important number to the Raven Queen. The number signifies the cycle of life: birth, death, and rebirth. When she wishes to communicate with mortals, she might use three black feathers, skulls, finger bones, and the like to give warning about an imminent danger or of an unforeseen threat.

The Raven Queen's Prayers

Divine characters in service to the Raven Queen receive great power in exchange for the prayers. They channel divine energy into potent attacks or use it to further her interests in the world. Although any divine character can find much to like here, these powers are suited to characters who worship the Raven Queen.

New Avenger Prayers

Rictus Grin — Avenger Attack 1

Your features twist in a deathly grimace, striking terror in those around you.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Fear, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. AC
Hit: 2[W] + Wisdom modifier damage. Until the end of your next turn, any enemy adjacent to you takes a −2 penalty to attack rolls.

Rotting Wound — Avenger Attack 5

Putrescence weeps from the wound you bestow, rotting your enemy from the inside out.

Daily ✦ Divine, Necrotic, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Fortitude
Hit: 2[W] + Wisdom modifier necrotic damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, if the target makes an attack on its turn, it takes a -2 penalty to saving throws at the end of that turn.

Decaying Presence — Avenger Utility 10

Your presence decays your enemy's defenses, allowing your prayers to strike without interference.

Daily ✦ Divine
Minor Action **Personal**
Effect: Choose one resistance to a damage type possessed by your *oath of enmity* target. Until you reduce your *oath of enmity* target to 0 hit points, any enemy adjacent to you does not benefit from any resistance to this damage type.

Chains of Letherna — Avenger Attack 17

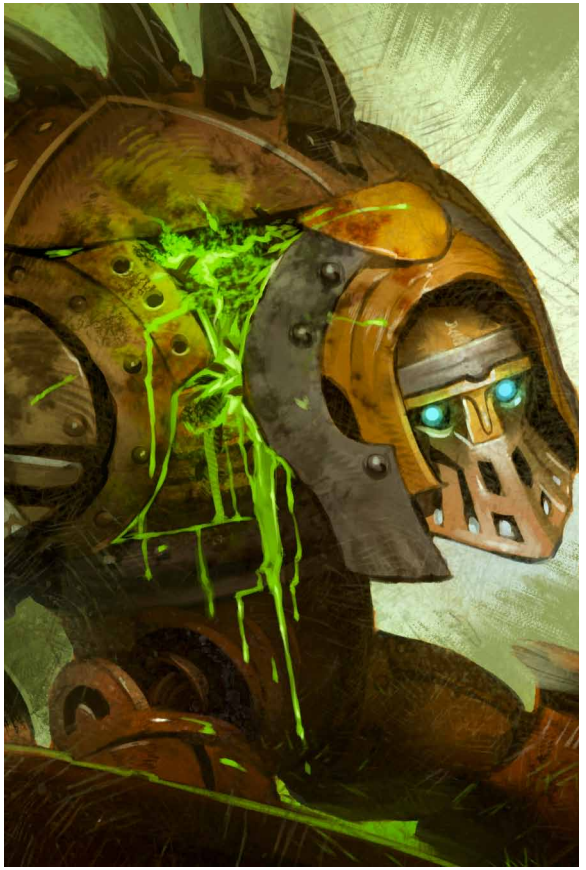
You invoke your god's power to bind your enemy in icy chains until you can visit the divine vengeance its presence demands.

Encounter ✦ Cold, Divine, Implement
Standard Action **Ranged** 5
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Reflex
Hit: 1d10 + Wisdom cold damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of your next turn. Until the end of your next turn, any enemy that ends its turn in a space adjacent to the target takes cold damage equal to your Wisdom modifier.

Leprous Wound — Avenger Attack 19

Your dire strike causes your enemy to fall to pieces.

Daily ✦ Divine, Necrotic, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Wisdom vs. Fortitude
Hit: 2[W] + Wisdom modifier necrotic damage. Whenever the target takes damage from an attack, it takes 10 extra necrotic damage and is slowed until the end of your next turn (save ends).
Miss: Half damage, and the target takes 10 necrotic damage the next time an attack hits it before the start of your next turn.



Raven Wings — Avenger Utility 22

Death's shroud falls upon you, but your god intercedes and spares you from the approaching doom.

Daily ✦ Divine, Healing, Teleportation
No Action **Personal**
Trigger: An attack drops you to 0 hit points or fewer
Effect: You teleport 5 squares and can spend a healing surge.

New Cleric Prayers

Curse of Misfortune — Cleric Attack 1

Fate intervenes and consigns the enemy to defeat as its attacks fail and its stratagems lead to ruin.

Daily ✦ Divine, Implement, Psychic
Standard Action **Close** burst 3
Target: Each enemy in burst
Attack: Strength or Wisdom vs. Will
Hit: Whenever the target makes an attack roll, it rolls twice and uses the lower result (save ends).
Aftereffect: The target takes 10 psychic damage.
Miss: The target takes 10 psychic damage.

Seized Destiny — Cleric Utility 6

You foster courage where fear reigns, and you provide strength where weakness rules.

Daily ✦ Divine
Standard Action **Close** burst 5
Target: You and each ally in burst
Effect: The target gains temporary hit points equal to 5 + your Wisdom modifier and gains a +2 power bonus to Will until the end of the encounter.

Union of Three Fates — Cleric Attack 13

Three inky tendrils emerge from your target, and those touched by the malignant appendages learn their fates, for good or ill.

Encounter ✦ Cold, Divine, Healing, Implement, Necrotic
Standard Action **Ranged** 10
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength or Wisdom vs. Fortitude
Hit: 1d10 + Wisdom modifier cold and necrotic damage. Choose one, two, or three creatures within 5 squares of the target. One creature can spend a healing surge. Another creature takes 1d10 cold damage. And one creature takes 1d10 necrotic damage.

Breath of the Raven Queen — Cleric Attack 19

You release the Raven Queen's breath to assail your enemies, binding them in black ice to leach strength from their bodies and their souls.

Daily ✦ Cold, Divine, Implement, Necrotic
Standard Action **Close** blast 5
Target: Each creature in blast
Attack: Strength or Wisdom vs. Fortitude
Hit: 3d6 + Wisdom modifier cold damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).
First Failed Saving Throw: The target is restrained instead of immobilized (save ends).
Second Failed Saving Throw: The target also takes ongoing 10 necrotic damage (save ends).
Miss: 3d6 cold damage.

Death for Death — Cleric Utility 22

You pluck fate's strings to alter the outcome of your ally's attack.

Daily ✦ Divine
Immediate Interrupt **Ranged** 5
Trigger: An ally misses with an attack
Target: The triggering ally
Effect: The ally loses 1 healing surge and rerolls the attack with a bonus to the attack equal to your Wisdom modifier. If the ally doesn't have a healing surge to lose, he or she instead loses hit points equal to his or her surge value.

Invoker Prayers

Death's Denial — Invoker Utility 2

Your utterance prevents death from claiming new victims.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Healing, Zone
Standard Action **Close** burst 5
Effect: The burst creates a zone of divine power that lasts until the end of your next turn. When a nonbloodied ally within the zone becomes bloodied or drops to 0 hit points or fewer, that creature can spend a healing surge.

Death's Dread Whisper — Invoker Attack 7

Your voice drops to a whisper and from your mouth issues your enemies' undoing.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Implement
Standard Action **Close** blast 5
Target: Each creature in blast
Attack: Wisdom vs. Fortitude
Hit: The target is dazed and takes a −2 penalty to attack rolls until the end of your next turn.

Vile Plague — Invoker Attack 15

At your command, the ground releases ancient plagues once used to harvest new souls for the Lord of the Dead.

Daily ✦ Divine, Implement, Necrotic, Poison
Standard Action **Area** burst 5 within 10 squares
Target: Each creature in burst
Attack: Wisdom vs. Fortitude
Hit: The target suffers the vile plague (save ends). A target suffering from the vile plague is dazed, slowed, and takes ongoing 10 necrotic and poison damage. In addition, all creatures adjacent to the target suffering from the vile plague at the end of their turn take 5 necrotic damage.
Miss: The target takes 10 necrotic and poison damage, and it is slowed until the end of its next turn.

Vengeful Dead — Invoker Utility 16

When your ally falls, you intone a dread word to bind its spirit to the flesh, causing the companion to rise again and fight on your behalf.

Daily ✦ Divine
Minor Action **Ranged** 10
Target: One dead ally
Effect: The target becomes an undead ally until the end of the encounter. The target regains hit points equal to its bloodied value and gains the undead keyword. It is slowed, immune to disease and poison, has resist 10 necrotic and vulnerable 5 radiant, and its melee attacks deal extra necrotic damage equal to your Wisdom modifier. The target is otherwise unchanged and can act normally. At the end of the encounter, the ally dies, but can be brought back to life with the Raise Dead ritual or similar means.

Age's Infirmity — Invoker Attack 23

Your command sees the enemy age rapidly, forcing time's ravages to come crashing in if only for a moment.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Implement, Necrotic
Standard Action **Area** burst 1 within 10 squares
Target: Each creature in burst
Attack: Wisdom vs. Fortitude
Hit: 1d10 + Wisdom necrotic damage, and the target is slowed and weakened until the end of your next turn.

Harm — Invoker Attack 29

You speed your enemy to death's door by draining its life and vitality with one cruel command.

Daily ✦ Divine, Implement, Necrotic
Standard Action **Melee** touch
Primary Target: One creature
Primary Attack: Wisdom vs. Fortitude
Hit: 7d10 + Wisdom modifier necrotic damage. If this attack bloodies the target, it takes 1d10 extra damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: You make a close burst 5 secondary attack. This attack gains the fear keyword.
Secondary Target: Each enemy in burst that can see you
Secondary Attack: Wisdom vs. Will
Hit: The target chooses to move its speed away from you or takes a −2 penalty to attack rolls until the end of the encounter.

Paladin Prayers

Fortune Spurned Smite — Paladin Attack 3

Your weapon burns with dark flames. What the flames touch becomes craven and fearful, which are traits despised by fortune.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Fear, Necrotic, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength or Charisma vs. Fortitude
Hit: 2[W] + Strength or Charisma modifier necrotic damage. The next time the target takes damage before the start of your next turn, it moves up to its speed away from you.

Reaper's Harvest — Paladin Attack 9

Your weapon parts your enemy's defenses, letting you claim the bounty of its defeat.

Daily ✦ Divine, Healing, Necrotic, Psychic, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength or Charisma vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Strength or Charisma modifier necrotic and psychic damage, and the target is subject to your divine sanction (see *Divine Power*, page 82) until the end of your next turn.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: If this attack reduces the target to 0 hit points, you can spend a healing surge and regain hit points equal to twice your surge value.

Frozen Shackles — Paladin Attack 17

Heat flees from your enemy, causing the target to freeze in place.

Encounter ✦ Cold, Divine, Implement
Standard Action **Ranged** 10
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength or Charisma vs. Fortitude
Hit: 2d8 + Strength or Charisma modifier cold damage, and the target is immobilized until it takes damage from an attack. If the target is marked by you, it also grants combat advantage until the end of your next turn.

Visage of Sorrow — Paladin Attack 19

You call forth divine power from the Shadowfell, welcoming its power to transform your aspect to one of utter sorrow and grief.

Daily ✦ Divine, Fear, Implement, Psychic
Standard Action **Close** burst 2
Target: Each enemy in burst
Attack: Strength or Charisma vs. Will
Hit: 3d8 + Strength or Charisma modifier psychic damage, and the target is subject to your divine sanction until the end of your next turn.
Effect: Until the end of the encounter, melee and ranged attacks made against you take a −2 penalty.

Grave Smite — Paladin Attack 23

Your smite sends the enemy to the grave.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Necrotic, Weapon
Standard Action **Melee** weapon
Target: One creature
Attack: Strength or Charisma vs. AC
Hit: 3[W] + Strength or Charisma modifier necrotic damage, and the target falls prone and cannot stand until the end of your next turn.
Special: When you gain this power, choose Strength or Charisma as the ability you use when making attack rolls and damage rolls with this power.

World in Winter Paladin Attack 25

Cold blossoms around you, bringing ice and snow in from the Shadowfell.

Daily ✦ Cold, Divine, Necrotic, Weapon, Zone
Standard Action **Close** burst 1
Target: Each enemy in burst
Attack: Strength or Charisma vs. AC
Hit: 4[W] + Strength or Charisma modifier cold and necrotic damage.
Effect: The burst creates a zone of freezing cold and blowing snow that lasts until the end of the encounter. The zone moves with you. Squares inside the zone are difficult terrain and lightly obscured. When an enemy ends its turn within the zone, it takes 10 cold and necrotic damage. At the end of your turn, if you hit at least one enemy with a divine attack power that turn, the zone's size increases by 1 square (to a maximum of a close burst 5 zone).

Character Options

Those in service to the Raven Queen have several character options to better distinguish themselves from those characters and creatures who pledge service to other gods.

Soul Reaper

"Fear not death, my friend, for the Raven Queen is glad to meet you on the other side.

Prerequisite: Any divine class, must worship the Raven Queen

Death is the natural course for all things, from the lowly insect to the mightiest of gods. It is not an end, of course, but a beginning—the first step onto the road into the unknown. For you, death offers little fear or concern because you are confident that the Raven Queen will shepherd you to whatever fate your long service has earned. This comfort and understanding forms the cornerstone of your beliefs, and you carry this message wherever you go, consoling the grieving or speeding those who deserve to meet the Raven Queen on their way.

Soul Reaper Path Features

Harvesting Action (11th level): When you spend an action point to take an extra action on a turn in which you reduced a non-minion enemy to 0 hit points, you can also move your speed as a free action.

Disrupting Attack (11th level): You ignore necrotic resistance with your divine attack powers.

Drawn to Death (16th level): Whenever a creature within 5 squares of you reduces another creature to 0 hit points or fewer, you can shift 2 squares toward the triggering creature.

Soul Reaper Prayers

Grave Chill Soul Reaper Attack 11

When the dead fall, you speed their souls to the Shadowfell.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Implement
Immediate Reaction **Ranged** 5
Trigger: An ally within range of you bloodies an enemy with an attack
Primary Target: The triggering ally
Effect: You shift to a square adjacent to the target and make a burst 1 attack.
Secondary Target: Each enemy in burst
Attack: Strength, Wisdom, or Charisma vs. Fortitude
Hit: The target is dazed and immobilized until the end of your next turn.

Fated Outcome Soul Reaper Utility 12

All has been foreseen because each outcome has already unfolded in the Raven Queen's eyes.

Encounter ✦ Divine
Immediate Interrupt **Ranged** 10
Trigger: One ally within range of you misses on an attack roll, fails a saving throw, or fails a skill check.
Effect: The ally rerolls the attack roll, the saving throw, or the skill check, adding your Strength, Wisdom, or Charisma modifier to it.
Special: When you gain this power, choose Strength, Wisdom, or Charisma as the ability you use with this power.

Call of Letherna Soul Reaper Attack 20

A frigid wind moans as it swirls around you, bringing with it the malign atmosphere found only in the Raven Queen's demesne.

Daily ✦ Cold, Divine, Implement, Necrotic, Zone
Standard Action **Close** burst 5
Target: Each enemy in burst
Attack: Strength, Wisdom, or Charisma vs. Will
Hit: 4d6 + Strength, Wisdom, or Charisma modifier cold and necrotic damage, and you pull the target 4 squares.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: The burst creates a zone of killing cold that lasts until the end of your next turn. Any creature that starts its turn within the zone is slowed until the end of its next turn, and it takes 10 cold and necrotic damage.
Sustain Minor: The zone persists, and you pull each enemy within the zone 1 square toward the origin of the zone's burst.
Special: When you gain this power, choose Strength, Wisdom, or Charisma as the ability you use when making attack rolls and damage rolls with this power.

Heroic Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of any level who meets the prerequisites.

Armor of Winter

Prerequisite: Invoker, Covenant of Wrath class feature, must worship the Raven Queen

Benefit: Any undead hit by your *armor of wrath* power also takes 1d6 cold damage. If this attack bloodies an undead target, it is also immobilized until the end of your next turn.

Bitter Challenge

Prerequisite: Paladin, *divine challenge* power

Benefit: Whenever a target takes damage from your *divine challenge*, it is also slowed until the end of your next turn.

Dark Mantle

Prerequisite: Cleric, *healing word* power, must worship the Raven Queen

Benefit: Whenever you use *healing word*, you can forgo granting the extra hit points to instead grant resist necrotic 5 to the target until the end of your next turn. Increase the resistance to 10 at 11th level, and 20 at 21st level.

Dreadful Doom

Prerequisite: Revenant, invoker, Covenant of Malediction class feature

Benefit: You can push a target under the effect of *maledictor's doom* power 1 square whenever it is hit by a fear, cold, or necrotic attack.

Fate's Warning

Prerequisite: Cleric, *divine fortune* power, must worship the Raven Queen

Benefit: Whenever you hit with an attack or succeed on a saving throw benefiting from *divine fortune*, you also gain a +2 bonus to all defenses until the end of your next turn

Grave Fortune

Prerequisite: Revenant, cleric, *divine fortune* power

Benefit: When you hit with an attack benefiting from *divine fortune*, your attack deals extra necrotic damage equal to your Constitution or Dexterity modifier.

Memory of Death

Prerequisite: Avenger, *oath of enmity* power, must worship the Raven Queen

Benefit: When you target an undead creature with *oath of enmity*, the target grants combat advantage to you until the end of your next turn.

Pervasive Gloom

Prerequisite: Shadar-kai, any divine class, must worship the Raven Queen

Benefit: You gain the Channel Divinity power *pervasive gloom*.

Channel Divinity: Pervasive Gloom Feat Power

Night falls where you stand.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Zone
Free Action **Close** burst 1
Trigger: You hit an enemy with an attack
Effect: The burst creates a zone of shadows that lasts until the start of your next turn. Squares within the zone are heavily obscured.

Reaping Vengeance

Prerequisite: Revenant, avenger, *oath of enmity* power

Benefit: If the creature triggering your *dark reaping* was also your *oath of enmity* target, you deal 1d8 extra necrotic damage with *dark reaping*, for a total of 2d8 + your Constitution modifier necrotic damage.

Restless Dead

Prerequisite: Revenant, must worship the Raven Queen

Benefit: While you are at 0 hit points or fewer and still conscious, you gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls and all defenses.

Revenant's Challenge

Prerequisite: Revenant, paladin, *divine challenge* power, must worship the Raven Queen

Benefit: Whenever a target you marked takes damage from *divine challenge*, it also gains vulnerable 5 necrotic until the start of your next turn.

Shadow Legacy

Prerequisite: Shadar-kai, any divine class, must worship the Raven Queen

Benefit: You gain the Channel Divinity power *shadow legacy*.

Channel Divinity: Shadow Legacy Feat Power

You extend the ancient covenant between your people and the Raven Queen to an ally in danger.

Encounter ✦ Divine, Teleportation
Immediate Reaction **Ranged** 10
Trigger: An attack bloodies an ally within range
Target: The triggering ally
Effect: The target either teleports 3 squares or gains insubstantial until the start of your next turn.

Shadowfell Guidance

Prerequisite: Avenger, *divine guidance* power, must worship the Raven Queen

Benefit: When an ally hits with an attack benefiting from your *divine guidance*, the ally's attack deals extra necrotic damage equal to your Wisdom modifier.

Paragon Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of 11th level or higher who meets the other prerequisites.

Black Mantle

Prerequisite: 11th level, avenger, must worship the Raven Queen

Benefit: While wearing cloth armor or no armor and not using a shield, you gain resist 5 cold and resist 5 necrotic against attacks from your *oath of enmity* target. At 21st level, increase this resistance to 10.

Chilling Oath

Prerequisite: 11th level, shadar-kai, avenger, *oath of enmity* power

Benefit: When you use *oath of enmity*, your target is also slowed until the end of your next turn.

Covenant of the Raven Queen

Prerequisite: 11th level, invoker, must worship the Raven Queen

Benefit: Whenever you hit an undead with a divine encounter or daily attack power, you gain resist necrotic equal to your Constitution or Intelligence modifier until the start of your next turn.

Raven Queen's Outrage

Prerequisite: 11th level, cleric, must worship the Raven Queen

Benefit: Whenever you hit an undead creature with an encounter or daily power with the radiant keyword, you can also slide that creature 1 square.

Raven Queen's Scorn

Prerequisite: 11th level, avenger, *oath of enmity* power, must worship the Raven Queen

Benefit: When you use *oath of enmity* against an undead enemy, you teleport to any space adjacent to the target as a free action.

Epic Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of 21st level or higher who meets the prerequisites.

Echo of Letherna

Prerequisite: 21st level, any divine class, must worship the Raven Queen

Benefit: Your divine attack powers that deal radiant damage instead deal necrotic and radiant damage. These prayers gain the necrotic keyword.

Harvester of Sorrows

Prerequisite: 21st level, avenger, *oath of enmity* power, must worship the Raven Queen

Benefit: Whenever you reduce the target of your *oath of enmity* to 0 hit points, any enemy you can see within 10 squares grants combat advantage to you until the end of your next turn.

Epic Destiny: Raven Knight

Constant devotion and unswerving dedication to the Raven Queen won you a place in her service. Now you command death and wield its power against any who would subvert it for their own dark purposes.

Prerequisite: 21st level, must worship the Raven Queen

The Raven Queen's influence across the Shadowfell depends on trusted agents: those sorrowsworn and shadar-kai who make up the esteemed order of the Raven Knights. Charged with protecting the Raven

Queen's realm and safeguarding the Shadowfell from those who would pervert its dark power for dread purposes, they move with impunity across the plane, even going so far as to venture into distant worlds where they bring battle to the Raven Queen's myriad enemies. To join this order, you have worked to prove your worth and dedication to the deity and win a place among these guardians. Your fate might be to serve the deity as her chosen champion, but what better destiny could you choose after a life spent fighting in her name?

Immortality

You won the right to claim your place among the peerless Raven Knights. You don the black garb worn by all in this august order, cladding yourself in the soft velvet robes and wielding the deity's power in her name. In reward for your eternal service, the deity grants you a mighty fortress and lands in the Shadowfell to rule as you wish, warriors to fight beneath your banner, and servants to attend to your every wish. You might be a servant still, but you live as a king.

Dark Servitor: The deity's favor reveals itself in your flesh even before you earn the title. From the moment you begin your final quest, your body transforms, subtle at the start but profound when you overcome the last obstacle to your prize. Your connections to the natural world weaken as the Shadowfell asserts its influence over you, opening your eyes to new possibilities. Your facial features change, becoming monstrous but strangely alluring for all its bestial aspect. In time, you erase any connections to your former self when you become a sorrowsworn in truth.

By the time you complete your final quest, your old life is a dream compared to the power, prestige, and glory ahead. With your affairs in order, you embark to bring honor and glory to the deity, to join her other trusted servants as her chosen champion. You bear a new burden to protect the deity who entrusted you with such power. How you meet your mistress's enemies and whether you but do with the same loyalty and devotion you did earlier is up to you and your ambition. You might continue as you have or turn your considerable power to reach further than you ever thought possible.

Raven Knight Features

Sorrowborn (21st level): You gain a +2 bonus to Constitution, a +2 bonus to Dexterity, and a +2 bonus to speed.

If your origin is not already shadow, your origin changes to shadow, and henceforth you are considered a shadow creature for the purpose of effects that relate to creature origin.

You also gain darkvision if you do not already have darkvision.

Bleak Visage (21st level): Any enemy adjacent to you takes a –2 penalty to attack rolls against you.

Shadow Rush (24th level): Whenever you charge or run, you gain insubstantial and phasing until the end of your next turn.

On Sorrow's Wings (30th level): When you spend an action point to take an extra action, you can teleport 10 squares before taking the action

Raven Knight Prayer

Dark Scythe — **Raven Knight Utility 26**

You call a dire weapon and grip its cold wood, feeling its merciless energy flowing through your hands.

Daily ✦ Divine, Necrotic
Minor Action **Personal**

Effect: You transform a single weapon or implement in your hand into a *dark scythe*. It remains a *dark scythe* until the end of the encounter. Your weapon or implement retains all its traits, properties, and powers, and gains the following properties and powers.

Property: The *dark scythe* deals 2d10 extra necrotic damage.

Property: When you reduce a nonminion enemy to 0 hit points using the *dark scythe*, you regain hit points as if you had spent a healing surge.

Power *(Encounter)*: Free Action. *Trigger:* You hit an enemy with an attack using the *dark scythe*. *Effect:* That enemy is weakened (save ends).

About the Author

Robert J. Schwalb is a freelance game designer with numerous design and development credits to his name. His most recent works include the *Divine Power, Eberron® Player's Guide, Eberron Campaign Guide, Player's Handbook 2, P2 Demon Queen's Enclave, Manual of the Planes, Martial Power, Draconomicon I: Chromatic Dragons,* the *Forgotten Realms Player's Guide,* and numerous articles in *Dragon®* and *Dungeon®* magazines. Robert lives in Tennessee with his wife Stacee and his paratrooper battle cats.

EBERRON

Bazaar of the Bizarre

Dragonshard Items

By Eric Cagle

Illustrations by Evan Shipard

Among the powerful dragonmarked houses of Khorvaire, the acquisition and exploitation of the power inherent within dragonshards has always been high on their list of priorities. Infused with the magic, dragonshards impart powerful energy into a staggering variety of magic items.

Although the general populace can and does make use of items empowered with dragonshards (even obliquely, such as riding on the *lightning rail*), those blessed with dragonmarks gain the largest benefit from dragonshards. Centuries of magical experimentation combined with testing "in the field" have produced many specialized magic items that augment the already formidable talents of the dragonmarked.

This article describes several new dragonshard items. Some of the magic items are openly known, while others are extremely rare or even unique. The techniques used in the creation of these items are typically tightly held trade secrets and constant espionage occurs between the houses to learn these secrets. Indeed, some of the histories provided with these dragonshard magic items may in fact be part of a misinformation campaign or front for an even more mysterious past.

Guardian Circlets

Members of House Deneith are in great demand by esteemed individuals throughout Khorvaire as bodyguards, but their services were never more prized than during the Last War. However, during that tumultuous time, those bearing the Mark of Sentinel found themselves placed in increasingly dangerous and violent situations—guarding princes, generals, and other leaders that took themselves to the front lines.

After numerous reports from frustrated house members complaining about protecting clients who insisted on plunging into full-on conflicts, leaders in House Deneith commissioned the creation of new items to help out their members. One set of such items were *guardian circlets*, a pair of magically linked necklaces that allow the Deneith protector to impose himself between the client and certain doom.

Utilized to great success, *guardian circlets* are prized by Deneith members. In one notable case, a deneith guardian charged with the protection of Orom Tabar, an envoy with House Cannith. Tabar at first balked at having to wear the circlet (considering it demeaning), but changed his tune when the caravan carrying himself and his Deneith bodyguard was

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attacked while entering into Cyre. Literally yanked to safety by the item, the grateful Tabar later helped broker a deal within his house for the continued creation of *guardian circlets* for use by House Deneith.

Guardian's Circlets **Level 8+**

The bodyguards of House Deneith relish these paired necklaces to keep their clients safer from harm.

Lvl 8	+2	3,400 gp	Lvl 23	+5	425,000 gp
Lvl 13	+3	17,000 gp	Lvl 28	+6	2,125,000 gp
Lvl 18	+4	85,000 gp			

Item Slot: Neck

Enhancement: Fortitude, Reflex, and Will

Power (Daily ✦ Teleportation): Immediate Interrupt. Use this power when the wearer of the attuned circlet is within 5 squares and would be bloodied by an attack. You and the ally switch spaces and you take the damage instead.

Level 18 or 23: As above, affecting the ally within 10 squares.

Level 28: As above, affecting the ally within 15 squares.

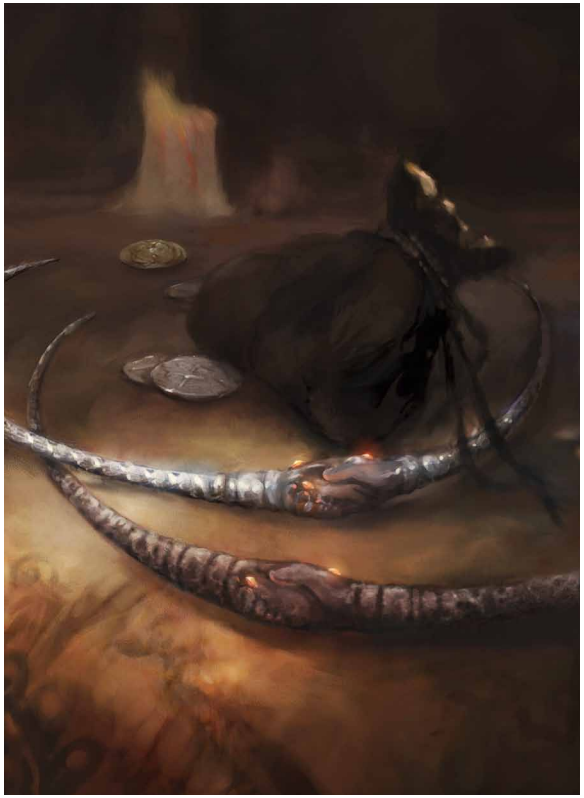
Special: If you have the Mark of Sentinel, add 5 squares to the range of the guardian's circlet.

Special: Each guardian circlet has one attuned circlet. The attuned circlet has no magical properties beyond the attunement, and does not take up the neck item slot of its wearer. The wearer of the guardian circlet can create a replacement attuned circlet during an extended rest (destroying any existing attuned circlet).

Madeth's Magical Musician

Although the concept of hospitality means considerably more to the members of House Ghallanda than merely running inns or taverns, there are many aspects of these businesses that the Ghallandas must deal with on a daily basis, including both entertainment of clients and keeping them in line should things get rowdy.

An entrepreneurial member of the Hostelers Guild named Ullan Madeth established a small, successful franchise of taverns within Hareth's Folly in Sharn. Although Madeth was a genius when it came to food and accommodations, he was a miserable failure when it came to providing entertainment. After spending several small fortunes repairing his businesses after drunken hooligans trashed them for poor performances by musicians, Madeth decided to go an alternate route.



After calling in several favors, Madeth convinced a talented magewright to create *Madeth's magical musician*—a small music box that eliminated the need for musicians altogether. The magic item also contains enchantments that bolster charm effects, making it easy to calm down rowdy patrons. Madeth's device became such a success that he sold his taverns and markets *Madeth's magical musicians* exclusively to others in the hospitality business.

Madeth's Magical Musician **Level 3**

This tiny, well-carved wooden box holds a small fiddle bow. With a touch, it produces delightful, mesmerizing music.

Wondrous Item 680 gp

Power (Daily): Standard Action. For 1 hour, the item plays a pleasant tune that can be heard within 10 squares.

Power (Daily ✦ Charm): Minor Action. You gain a +2 item bonus to attack rolls with charm powers until the end of your next turn.

Benefactor Armor

Carefully crafted with Khyber shards binding a Small water elemental, this magnificent armor shimmers like light bouncing off of gently swelling seas. During the Last War, the most powerful and senior members of House Jorasco wore *benefactor armor* into the worst of conflicts to help their clients. As a result, most of these armors were lost, stolen, or looted from the bodies of fallen Jorasco healers.

The few remaining sets of this armor are kept in the House's main refuges. Four sets alone sit inside the Great Healing Hall in Sharn, awaiting use if and when the next war begins. Several sets of the armor are rumored to be stored at the Vedykar Enclave in Karrnath, one possibly owned and worn by Baron Ulara d'Jorasco herself. Among their many other charges, members of the house are ordered to keep an eye out for other sets of unaccounted *benefactor armor*. When information reached the ears of the Medics Guild, they sent a large contingent of mercenaries and field medics to the outskirts of Droaam in

order to locate a set thought to be worn by a mighty hobgoblin cleric. The rumors proved to be correct, but were part of a trap luring the Jorascoans into an ambush. The house has sworn revenge and plans to send an even larger contingent bolstered with House Medani inquisitives to assist in finding the armor and returning it to its proper place.

Benefactor Armor Level 9+

The Khyber shards of this armor are set in a wave pattern, resembling flowing water.

Lvl 9	+2	4,200 gp	Lvl 24	+5	525,000 gp
Lvl 14	+3	21,000 gp	Lvl 29	+6	2,625,000 gp
Lvl 19	+4	105,000 gp			

Armor: Chain, Scale, Plate
Enhancement: AC
Power (Encounter ✦ Healing): Free Action. Use this power when you use a healing power. Each ally healed by that power gains additional hit points equal to your Charisma modifier.
Power (Daily ✦ Healing): Free Action. *Trigger:* You use a healing power. *Effect:* One adjacent ally can use a healing surge and regains additional hit points equal to your Charisma modifier.

Stern Handler's Wraps

The magebreeders of the Feral Heart, a semi-secret and sinister organization within House Vadalis, has long dabbled in horrific experiments to create living weapons. Although they are masters at blending dark magic with animal husbandry to create dangerous beasts, more often than not, these creations turn on their creators. Indeed, one of the reasons why the Feral Heart hasn't been as prevalent or public with their intentions is the surprisingly high mortality rate among their "touched" magebreeders.

Over a hundred years ago, an extremely talented magebreeder named Perr Hanton set about crafting magic items to help him maintain control over the living abominations they brought into existence. Known for his extreme cruelty and dominating nature, Hanton created the *stern handler's wraps*—special gloves that cowed recalcitrant creatures that had gone berserk from rage.

The wraps proved highly successful, and the Feral Heart bought, bartered, and stole large quantities of dragonshards to create numerous sets of the gloves. Ironically, the creator of these dragonshard items was killed after one of his beastly creations broke loose and rampaged across the countryside for years before being killed by more law-abiding members of House Vadalis.

Adventure Seed

After a PC obtains a set of new magic armor through an adventure, the heroes finds themselves being tailed and watched by several elusive figures. Rumors of the PC's bounty and an incorrect description of the armor reach the ears of House Jorasco, who hires an inquisitive to trail the heroes and set them up for either a business meeting or an ambush to reacquire what they believe to be a set of benefactor armor. In reality, the PCs' descriptions are close enough to that of an adventuring group that has managed to obtain a true suit of the rare armor. Unfortunately, the other party begins cutting a violent swath in the countryside, causing headaches for the PCs as they suffer a case of mistaken identity.

Stern Handler's Wraps Level 4+

Beasts of all kinds shy away from the wearer of these plain looking wraps, which glimmer with small dragonshards.

Lvl 4 840 gp
Lvl 14 21,000 gp
Lvl 24 525,000 gp
Item Slot: Hands
Property: You gain a +1 item bonus to Nature checks to handle animals.
Level 14: +2 item bonus.
Level 24: +3 item bonus.
Special: If you have the Mark of Handling, increase the item bonus by 1.
Power (Daily): Immediate Interrupt. *Trigger:* You become bloodied from a melee attack. *Effect:* The enemy that bloodied you is pushed 3 squares.

Chainreach Weapon

The weaponsmiths of House Cannith create untold numbers of exotic weapons, some of which rarely get beyond the experimental stage. One of the more unusual items to come out of the Cannith workshops is the *chainreach weapon*.

Adorned with numerous small chains embedded on the hilt and business end of the weapon, a chainreach weapon allows the wielder to make melee attacks against targets normally out of range. The blade or hammer's head launches toward the target, attached to a length of sturdy chain. The chains then snake around the enemy's limbs, binding them up and knocking them down on a successful strike.

Despite its potential use on the battlefield, *chainreach weapons* prove most popular in places where bloodsports are common, such as in Darguun, the Demon Wastes, Droaam, and certain portions of the Lhazaar Principalities. The *chainreach weapon's* unusual and showy method for taking out an oppo-

nent serves well to stoke the audience's thirst for blood. Many wielders of this weapon wait until the perfect moment to unleash the weapon's ability, sending out dancing coils of chains to overwhelm a surprised victim.

Chainreach Weapon **Level 5+**

This melee weapon sports several smaller chains on its hilt and blade.

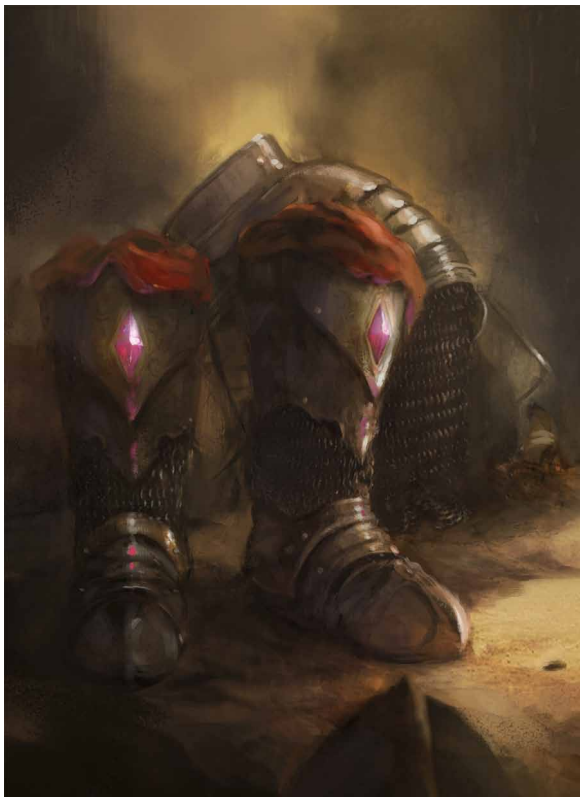
Lvl 5	+1	1,000 gp	Lvl 20	+4	125,000 gp
Lvl 10	+2	5,000 gp	Lvl 25	+5	625,000 gp
Lvl 15	+3	25,000 gp	Lvl 30	+6	3,125,000 gp

Weapon: Any melee
Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls
Critical: +1d6 damage per plus or +1d8 damage per plus if you have combat advantage.
Power (Daily): Minor action. You may make a melee basic attack against a single target up to 5 squares away. On a successful hit, the target is also knocked prone.

Resolute Armor

The dwarves of House Kundarak have immensely deep pockets, as everyone knows. As a result, they have access to relatively large supplies of Khyber shards with which to craft fine magic items. Members of the Iron Gate, a branch of the Warding Guild, serve as guards and sentries for especially important locations. Their services do not come cheaply, and House Kundarak provides these stalwart individuals some of the finest arms and armor that the house can offer. One such item is *resolute armor*—thick plate infused with Khyber Shards that make the wearer almost impossible to move from a location against her will.

The use of *resolute armor* helped prevent several notable break-ins and attacks on locations guarded by members of the Iron Gate. In one case, three guards wearing the armor successfully repelled an all-out assault by servants of the Blood of Vol that moved into Karrnath immediately after the Last War. The Iron Gate guards were assigned by King Kaius III himself to protect a small vault that contained family relics, heirlooms, and more importantly, damning evidence of Kaius' kidnapping and replacement of his grandson. Although the Iron Gate guards were unaware of what the vault contained, they nonetheless held their ground and prevented the Blood of Vol from revealing Kaius' dark secret—the *resolute armor* rooting them in place in front like a bulwark of steel and stone.



The armor itself is bound with a Small earth elemental. The heavy metal boots are covered with granite slabs decorated with streaks of Khyber shards.

Resolute Armor **Level 8+**

This sturdy looking armor is covered with granite slabs fused with pulsing Khyber shards.

Lvl 8	+2	3,400 gp	Lvl 23	+5	425,000 gp
Lvl 13	+3	17,000 gp	Lvl 28	+6	2,125,000 gp
Lvl 18	+4	85,000 gp			

Armor: Plate
Enhancement: AC
Property: When an effect forces you to move, you move 1 fewer square.
Level 13 or 18: 2 fewer squares.
Level 23 or 26: 3 fewer squares.
Special: If you have the Mark of Warding, you move 1 fewer square when an effect forces you to move, in addition to the benefit you already receive from the armor.
Power (Daily): Immediate Interrupt. *Trigger:* An enemy attempts to push, pull, or slide you. *Effect:* You ignore the forced movement, and the enemy is knocked prone.

Coverbreaker Weapon

The bounty hunters and inquisitives of House Tharashk excel at locating and capturing criminals, debtors, and dangerous individuals of all stripes. To assist them in their pursuits, key members of the house worked with unaffiliated craftsmen and magewrights to create special weapons and armor. These items were intended to be used in urban settings, when the house's quarry used the cover and concealment of the environment to its utmost.

One such innovation was the *coverbreaker weapon*—a ranged weapon, typically a bow or crossbow, carefully built around attuned dragonshards. The weapon helps the wielder pinpoint targets hidden in

the shadows or protected by cover, then pulling them out from their sanctuary and making them vulnerable to additional attacks.

Coverbreaker Weapon Level 13+

Few can hide from the unerring accuracy of this ranged weapon.

Lvl 13	+3	17,000 gp	Lvl 23	+5	425,000 gp
Lvl 18	+4	85,000 gp	Lvl 28	+6	2,125,000 gp

Weapon: Any ranged
Enhancement: Attack rolls and damage rolls
Critical: +1d6 damage per plus or +1d8 damage per plus if the target has cover relative to the wielder.
Property: Gain a +2 bonus to hit an enemy with cover or superior cover.
Power (Daily): Free Action. *Trigger*: You hit with an enemy with this weapon. *Effect*: Slide the enemy 3 squares.
Special: If you have the Mark of Finding, slide the enemy 5 squares.

Amulet of the Diplomat

Amulets of the diplomat are produced by House Sivis to give their negotiators an edge in important meetings. Although the act of using magic during negotiations is universally frowned upon by most groups, House Sivis typically get a pass for this unspoken rule, mainly due to their firm neutrality and honest desire for peaceful conclusions to conflict.

Junior members of the guild receive an *amulet of the diplomat* for excellent performance and wear them as badges of honor among their peers. The *amulet of the diplomat* helps protect the wearer against magical effects that influence the mind, and it's considered a terrible breach of etiquette to even attempt such a thing against a member of House Sivis, much less one wearing this item. Perpetrators who dare to try this tactic are ensured of getting a black mark from the house, guaranteeing that their own business ventures will falter without the "blessing" of House Sivis to carry their messages or authenticate their legal documents.

Adventure Seed

The PCs are asked by a friend within House Lyrandar to transport a fallen comrade's *tempest fan* back to his family in Stormhome. With possession of the *tempest fan*, the PCs are given free transport on several elemental airships and galleons back to Stormhome. On the last leg of the journey, however, the captain of the last vessel proves to be a rival of the previous owner of the fan. He decides to keep the fan for himself as a trophy and schemes to either have his crew assault the PCs, steal it in the middle of the night, or lie to the PCs and abandon them in some desolate area far from their destination ... without the fan. If the captain succeeds in stealing the *tempest fan*, the PCs must not only try to locate the item, but also deal with the tempestuous wrath and anger of the former owner's family, bent on revenge.

Amulet of the Diplomat Level 7+

This subtle, but pleasing looking amulet gives the wearer a confident and soothing manner.

Lvl 7	+2	2,600 gp	Lvl 22	+5	325,000 gp
Lvl 12	+3	13,000 gp	Lvl 27	+6	1,625,000 gp
Lvl 17	+4	65,000 gp			

Item Slot: Neck
Enhancement: Fortitude, Reflex, and Will
Power (Daily): Minor Action. Until the end of your next turn, you gain an item bonus to Diplomacy checks, Will defense, and saving throws against charm effects equal to the amulet's enhancement bonus.

Tempest Fan

Masters of storms and the strength of thunder, the members of House Lyrandar have learned numerous ways to channel the power of the storm. Riding high above the earth upon their airships or skimming the waves in their enhanced galleons, those who belong to this house range far and wide over Eberron.

Elite members of the house wield tremendous power, their dragonmarks allowing them to pull upon the inherent magical might of storms to unleash powerful blasts of lightning or cacophonous claps of thunder. As a symbol of their power, many high-ranking members of the house wield *tempest fans*. These metallic fans allow the bearer to teleport across a battlefield, arriving in a crackle of lightning that rakes their enemies.

Curiously, the members of the house who possess these items have created their own subtle language utilizing their fans, opening and closing them in a specific manner to convey some obscure meaning. This form of communication is based on the dignified court "language" of fans used by nobles and aristocracy, but with a distinctly more aggressive manner.

Tempest Fan Level 5+

The tines of this metal fan resemble lightning, augmented with ripples of electricity.

Lvl 5 1,000 gp
Lvl 15 25,000 gp
Lvl 25 625,000 gp
Wondrous Item
Property: Wizards can use this fan as an implement for wizard powers and wizards paragon path powers. As an implement, it grants a +1 enhancement bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls, and it deals 1d6 extra lightning damage on a critical hit.
Level 15: +3 enhancement bonus and 3d6 points of extra lightning damage on a critical hit.
Level 25: +5 enhancement bonus and 5d6 points of extra lightning damage on a critical hit.
Power (Daily ✦ Teleportation, Electricity): Move Action. You or an adjacent ally teleports up to 5 squares. Each enemy within a close 3 burst of this new location take 1d6 lightning damage.
Level 15: Teleport 10 squares and enemies take 3d6 lightning damage.
Level 25: Teleport 15 squares and enemies take 5d6 lightning damage.

Forgemaster's Gloves

As the premier craftsmen of Eberron, members of House Cannith are masters of the forge, the crucible, and the tinker's table. The workshops owned by House Cannith glow with intense heat, sometimes powered by magic, allowing its members to create truly awe-inspiring magic items.

Forgemaster's gloves are relatively common items used by the house's blacksmiths, armorers, and metallurgists, all of whom routinely deal with temperatures that border on the infernal. The gloves stave off the worst of this intense heat and in turn absorb some of this energy for later use. With a thought, the wearer can channel this energy into his own arcane attacks, transforming them into blasts of fire and waves of heat.

Despite the ubiquity of *forgemaster's gloves* within the house, they are also appropriately found within the workshops of the dwarves in Mror Hold and inside the tinker rooms of the gnomes in Zilargo. Despite their obvious uses on the battlefield, owners of *forgemaster's gloves* often consider themselves craftsmen first and combatants second, and take a dim view to non-craftsmen that don a pair. An individual wearing this magic item might be challenged to a duel—not one of combat, but to test his skill at blacksmithing or armorcrafting.

Forgemaster's Gloves Level 6+

These blacksmith's gloves are studded with dragonshards and emblazoned with a hammer and anvil.

Lvl 6 5,000 gp
Lvl 16 125,000 gp
Lvl 26 3,125,000 gp
Item Slot: Hands
Property: Gain resist 5 fire.
Level 16: Gain resist 10 fire.
Level 26: Gain resist 15 fire.
Special: If you have the Mark of Making, increase the resistance by 5.
Power (Daily ✦ Fire): Minor Action. The next attack power you use deals 1d6 extra fire damage
Level 16: 2d6 extra fire damage.
Level 26: 3d6 extra fire damage.

Inquisitives Goggles

Worn by some of more promising members of House Medani, *inquisitives* goggles give these highly observant individuals enhanced powers to see minute details with greater clarity. Created by some of the Houses' master spies along with artisan jewelcrafters and magewrights, the goggles bear two highly polished dragonshards embedded inside brass cylinders etched with enhancing runes and held to the head with straps made from beholder hide.

In addition, *inquisitives goggles* grant the wearer the uncanny ability to both spot danger and to find weaknesses in an enemy's defenses while trying to remain hidden. This makes the goggles extremely useful for inspectors and other law enforcement officials within the tight confines of huge cities, such as Sharn and Wroat.

Inquisitives Goggles Level 12

These intricate goggles allow unparalleled observation.

Item Slot: Head 13,000 gp
Property: Gain a +2 item bonus to Insight checks and Perception checks.
Special: If you have the Mark of Detection, increase the bonus to +3.
Property (Daily): Minor Action. On your next attack, you ignore penalties due to concealment or total concealment.

Tenebrous Shroud

The rivalry between House Phiarlan and House Thuranni has so far remained behind the scenes, with both groups playing intricate games of cat-and-mouse to gain the upper hand. Considering the fact that members of both houses bear the Mark of Shadows, it's appropriate that the magic items they carry follow a similar theme.

Both houses make use of *tenebrous shrouds*, cloaks made from the blackest of thread and then interwoven with dragonshards enchanted to absorb light. Unlike most dragonshards, those threaded into tenebrous shrouds become blacker than pitch.

The *tenebrous shroud's* magic allow it to absorb necrotic energy with relative easy—an advantage as both groups pull upon the dark powers they use to fuel many of their attacks. Its most distinctive power, however, blinds attackers and renders the wearer invisible for a short time, allowing her to escape and strike from the shadows once more.

Recently, teams of House Phiarlan infiltrators wearing *tenebrous shrouds* attempted to sneak their way into House Thuranni's secret enclave at Stonespur to discover what was hidden in the depths beneath the black citadel there. A ferocious, battle waged through the shadows as the two groups fought. Although the Phiarlans were unsuccessful in getting within the inner sanctums, they learned enough to warrant another possible assault in the future—further raising tensions between the two houses.

Tenebrous Shroud **Level 13+**

This cloak wraps around you in inky blackness.

Lvl 13	+3	17,000 gp	Lvl 23	+5	425,000 gp
Lvl 18	+4	85,000 gp	Lvl 28	+6	2,125,000 gp

Item Slot: Neck
Enhancement: Fortitude, Reflex, and Will
Property: Gain resist 10 necrotic.
Level 15 or 20: Resist 15 necrotic
Level 25 or 30: Resist 20 necrotic.
Power (Daily): Immediate reaction. You can use this power when you are hit by a melee attack. You become invisible until the end of your next turn.

Ring of the Warforged

During the Last War, huge armies of warforged were created by House Cannith to bolster the ranks of living soldiers. Incredible amounts of research and resources went into the creation of the warforged, creating entire branches of study that the house kept from prying eyes. One of the earliest problems encountered by House Cannith was how to imbue inanimate objects with the spark of life. Cannith researchers worked backward at first, learning how to temporarily imbue some of the traits of a warforged into a flesh-and-bone creature. The *ring of the warforged* proved the most successful item in this research and several copies were created for study. It's said that Baron Starrin d'Cannith himself wore the first *ring of the warforged* to gain insight into how work would progress.

The *ring of the warforged* allows the wearer to utilize warforged components, embedding them into their own flesh. As long as the wearer keeps the ring on, these items work as normal, giving tremendous insight into the particular way that warforged function in the world. In addition, the *ring of the warforged* grants a boost to the overall toughness of the wearer when bloodied, emulating the resilience of the living constructs.

Owners of *rings of the warforged* often report a dramatic shift in their attitude toward the race. The warforged themselves often encourage the use of these items, seeing them as a useful way to change public opinion about their kind. This has backfired on more than a few occasions, however, with some wearers becoming repulsed and horrified at the "unnatural" manner in which the warforged exist.

Ring of the Warforged **Level 17+**

Decorated with dragonshards, this ring allows a wearer to grow to resemble a living construct.

Item Slot: Ring 65,000 gp
Property: You are able to attach (but not embed) warforged components as if you were a warforged.
Property (Daily): Immediate interrupt. Use this power when an attack would bloody you. You gain 10 temporary hit points. If you have reached a milestone today, you instead gain 20 temporary hit points.

Sandals of the Temporal Step

Blessed with control over movement and, with certain limitations, time, the members of House Orien have learned how to channel their power into dragonshards. *Sandals of the temporal step* came about as powerful members of the house experimented with various techniques involving teleportation and the manipulation of time. Although they represent only a small step toward an eventually complete understanding of the nature of time and motion, the sandals are still considered valuable items by the house.

The other houses, along with many governments, have taken great interest in obtaining their own *sandals of the temporal step* to boost the overall speed of armies and elite troops, both on the battlefield and during clandestine operations. Both Breland and Karrnath have lobbyists constantly meeting with House Orien officials to purchase as many as possible, while spies of those and other nations strive to learn the secrets of their creation to bypass the house altogether. Because of House Orien's diminished influence, they have taken a dim view to this sort of espionage.

Sandals of the Temporal Step Level 16

The energy pulsing from the dragonshards adorning these slippers move likes hands on a clock.

Item Slot: Feet **45,000 gp**

Property: Gain a +1 item bonus to speed when wearing light or no armor.

Power (Daily): Free Action. You gain an additional move action this turn.

Special: If you have the Mark of Passage, when you use the sandals' daily power, you also gain a +3 power bonus to speed until the end of your turn.

Adventure Seed

The PCs receive word of a warforged causing trouble with local officials, threatening them with harm if additional rights aren't granted to all warforged. Although this seems a simple case of a lone agitator, reports indicate that the individual isn't a typical looking warforged—considerably more "fleshy" in appearance.

Although the warforged in the area appreciate the sentiment, none of them know who, or what, the agitator is. As time goes on, tensions begin to rise as the individual, a human wizard wearing a *ring of the warforged*, starts targeting merchants and members of the military. The PCs need to confront the wizard before things get out of hand and the mobs begin assaulting warforged out of anger and misunderstanding.

About the Author

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Playing Vistani

By Chris Sims
Illustrations by Jason A Engle

Mysterious wanderers, orphans of three deities and three worlds.

Without homeland, the Vistani roam the world and its reflections. They weave enigmatic stories of their past, and their ways are inscrutable to outsiders. Vistani clans, full of folk of differing races, rove outside the politics and concerns of civilized places. Their magic and guile allow them to safely traverse the dark gulfs between settled areas and cross the walls between worlds. To sedentary people, these numinous vagabonds bring exotic goods, news, services, and skills. They take away new friends, orphaned children, and survival essentials, as well as more valuables than, perhaps, they honestly earned.

Play a Vistani if you want . . .

✦ to come from a culture that allows you to defy racial stereotypes despite your race.

✦ access to a wandering "nation" of potential allies with a culture full of mystery and adventure.

✦ to be a member of a bloodline that favors the avenger, druid, fighter, invoker, ranger, or rogue; or any arcane class.

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Origin

Although a mythic figure named Vistan appears in most of their origin stories, the Vistani claim no single origin and waffle even on Vistan's nature. They tell various tales of how they came to be eternal vagabonds and make a sport of coming up with new yarns around their nightly campfires. It is possible that those who become clan elders learn the true saga among these stories. But that is so only if the actual origin of the Vistani is remembered, distinguished among all the existing wild legends. Entirely likely is that each of these accounts contains elements of truth.

One starting point for the Vistani suggests that the people were once all halflings. These folk were among those first created by the union between Melora and Sehanine. When the two goddesses abandoned the race, the halfling Vistan took it harder than most. Although she recognized Avandra's maternal love for halflings, she also saw the adoptive nature of this kindness. The deep sadness of one rejected filled her. She considered the halflings to be unjustly orphaned, and she joined with others who felt the same, becoming their leader. With her followers, she vowed to make a home for young castaways and strays in need of family and support, halfling and otherwise. The first Vistani took the magic of fey moon, the callous world, and the winding road as their own, never to settle and grow complacent.

Similar in mythic scope, a legend places the Vistani as pivotal in the Dawn War, in which numerous mortals fought on the side of the primordials against the gods. The Vistani came from a burgeoning nation of mixed peoples. When battle lines in the Dawn War began to form, the majority of the folk of that land elected to serve the primordial Kir-Yagh, Queen of the Burning Mountains, who had until that time lorded over the region. The mystic Vistan stood against this, leading her people to help the gods. For her loyalty, she and her followers were granted the power to see through space, time, and fate. Vistan turned her poeple back toward the gods, but in the end, the gods feared the power they had given to Vistan and her followers. The evil deities wanted to destroy the Vistani. But the others—Sehanine, Melora, and Avandra in particular—gave the Vistani the chance and power to flee to hidden places. The Vistani wander still, the jealous eyes of some gods still upon them.

Another inception story places the Vistani as craftsfolk, diviners, and healers who supported the champion Vistan in his march to oppose the then-young Miran Empire of many millennia ago. Vistan's push into enemy territory succeeded initially, but eventually his legions met defeat deep in Miran. Vistan was slain, and those the Miran could capture were made slaves. Modern Vistani issue from those who, in a roving band, fled farther and farther from home to evade their would-be masters. Over time, the wayfarers gathered other refugees and displaced folk among them. They broke into smaller bands to survive better on limited resources. Eventually, the Miran Empire swallowed Vistan's homeland, and the endless trail became the only home of the Vistani.

A variant of this tale places the Vistani again within Miran. As the Miran conquered a land that was called Vistan or ruled by a monarch of the same name, the Vistani—wild people of Vistan—opposed the Miran at every turn. Even then, the Vistani were of mixed racial heritage, united by common culture. They used magic of all sorts to walk between parallel worlds to evade and thwart the conquerors. The Miran eventually captured the Vistani leader and used his or her blood in a vile ritual Bane had granted them. The curse laid upon the Vistani displaced them, dooming them to wander forever. Before the Vistani chief died, he or she placed a curse back upon the Miran, predicting that a gathering of the elements would destroy the empire. As with numerous dire malisons leveled by storied Vistani, this curse came to pass.

Around a Vistani campfire, when any one of these myths is concluded, the whole clan shouts, "Utterly true!" The clan members verbalize the same cry to the very next fable, and the one after that. But Vistani place more value on the spiritual essence of any story than its actual contents, and it is to this core meaning that they refer.

A People Apart

Vistani is not a race but a supernatural blood connection between folk of various races who have grown up in or joined Vistani clans. If you wish to play a Vistani, choose a PC race as normal, and then select the Vistani Heritage feat at 1st level to gain your connection to the Vistani. If you select the Vistani Heritage feat after 1st-level, your Dungeon Master can require you to explain how your character became Vistani. The most likely way is a Vistani Blooding ritual, which must be earned during the game—the DM is final arbiter of who can receive such an honor. Similarly, your DM can disallow retraining of bloodline feats if you have no explanation of how your character loses his or her link to the Vistani.

Lifestyle

Vistani are a nomadic people who travel in caravans of rolling house wagons, storage wagons, people, pets, and livestock. Well known is the fact that such Vistani clans roam the world, the Feywild, and the Shadowfell. Less known is that each clan has elders that know rituals and sites to cross between these planes. Hence, a Vistani caravan might be found anywhere in the parallel worlds between the elemental and immortal realms.

A clan caravan is a place full of color, music, and laughter. The people are dressed in vivid Vistani garb, and their wagons are painted to match. Unless a clan has some reason to pass unseen, Vistani travel loudly, keeping one another entertained on the road with spirited songs and bizarre tales. They hunt and gather as they go, meandering across the wilds at a meditative pace.

Nightly, whenever possible, a clan's camp resembles a carnival that celebrates another day's survival. Members gather around fires to sing, dance, and make sport in a fashion that is almost ritualistic. Among the favorite pastimes is a long session of storytelling in which the clan members recite traditional tales and make up new ones. Invited outsiders who perform well and show proper respect in these celebratory gatherings gain, in turn, the respect of their Vistani hosts.

Vistani only pause regularly in their wanderings during the three days of the full moon, which they call Fulltide. During this time, they work hard to complete tasks and undertake magical rituals. Each hopes to finish to rest on the third day, the morning after which the clan sets off again.

Leadership

Elders lead a Vistani clan, with a clan matriarch and patriarch at the hierarchy's top. "Elder" is a figurative term for those who merit leadership positions. Each elder is considered to be capable in some important task, whether it divination or bladework. The patriarch and matriarch are the most respected members of a clan, and on them is heaped the responsibility for the entire clan's welfare.

A patriarch is expected to maintain the clan's ability to engage outsiders—or "townies"—in battle, diplomacy, or trade. He oversees taking care of material needs, collecting food, driving off monsters, and maintaining equipment. It is he who chooses campsites and decides how to handle livestock.

The matriarch is the spiritual center of a clan. She always has some supernatural power. In situations that require wisdom and discernment, such as the application of Vistani law, she is the final judge. Although the patriarch oversees business deals, the matriarch often holds the key to the clan treasury.

Vistani clans seldom introduce untested outsiders to their true leaders. Instead, false ones act as the mouth of the elders, perhaps with the oversight of an elder among them.

Law

Crime is rare among the Vistani, because the clan members share hardships and rewards. When a Vistani does wrong, it is usually the wronged party that accuses the wrongdoer. The matriarch then sits in judgment, sometimes with the aid of magic. She allows the participants to speak by taking each one's hand and placing a dagger point on the palm, a symbol of consequences for falseness. Anyone who speaks out of turn loses his or her claim.

The matriarch's ruling is binding, and rivals are expected to forgive one another for their good and the good of the clan. Those who are acquitted of crimes must tell an oft-embellished tale of the deeds leading up to the trial. The guilty usually have to repair any harm they have done and, perhaps, suffer some embarrassing punishment. Serious offenses can result in public flogging, and the worst crimes lead to banishment from the Vistani. The matriarch or another magician places a curse upon the exile that marks him or her as an outlaw to be accepted by no other clan.

"Life on the unending trail can be cold and hard. But we have it better than the lions at your zoo or the peasants in your fields."

—Ludjeta Violca, Vistani matriarch

More often, the Vistani are dishonest, such as with petty thievery and confidence scams, toward non-Vistani. Although Vistani aren't given to severe crime, they have been known to rob travelers, especially disrespectful or bellicose ones, on the road. Vistani law prohibits provoking non-Vistani in any way that might bring harm to the clan. This said, they might go to great lengths to free a member imprisoned justly or not.

Magic

Although Vistani are noted for dexterous sword and knife fighting styles, their true talents run not toward the warrior's craft but to magical skill. Such power runs thick through Vistani caravans, and few nonmonstrous folk are as feared for their supernatural prowess and potent curses. A life spent mostly between civilized places requires Vistani to use everything at their disposal for convenience, protection, and survival. A reputation for eldritch potency is enough to protect them from persecution and attack in some cases, since even sentient monsters know tales of the Vistani.

The truth is that common Vistani use magic in ritual form much more than settled counterparts. They value divination, exploration, restoration, and travel magic highly. A single caravan should be able to provide any common rituals of these types, as well as a few that aren't so widespread.

Among these latter rituals and powers, one can find Vistani curses. However, tales tell of Vistani issuing curses with but an expletive or foul vow. Told with awe and dread are accounts of curses dying Vistani uttered when their caravan was destroyed.

Population

Vistani clans include among them a diverse mix of races, almost all of them of Vistani blood. Each clan carefully maintains its population in several ways. These include adoption, blooding, splitting, and a rite of passage known as "the Jaunt."

Vistani clans traditionally adopt willing orphaned youngsters, whom the Vistani refer to as "moon-children," and raise them in the Vistani way. A clan might collect urchins from city streets, take parentless kids from city orphanages, accept children from destitute parents, and shelter runaways. Some clans have agreements with settlements along their migration path to take in orphans. Others quietly recruit among the needy. An unscrupulous or needy few Vistani might resort to kidnapping. Despite the fact that Vistani ways are clearly superior to those of townies, Vistani consider this latter method unseemly.

All those invited to join a Vistani clan go through a ritual known as "Blooding" Usually, children go through "Blooding" when born or when they are ready to commit to being part of the clan. Outsiders who do a great service to or for a Vistani clan might be invited to become "one of the blood" through a Blooding ritual.

Townie Ambivalence

Vistani moral permissiveness and their use of local resources rarely endear them to settled folk. However, townies also find Vistani exotic and exciting. The arrival of a caravan usually means the start of a minor carnival, as well as the availability of unusual, sometimes magical, goods and services. Vistani avoid places where they regularly face persecution, and they leave anywhere that public sentiment has turned against them.

Growth of population is likely, despite losses to disease, age, and violence from monsters and those who dislike the Vistani. When a clan grows too large to travel quickly and feed itself on the move, it splits. The matriarch chooses leaders for the new clan, then the whole group revels together for the last time. After this one night of celebration, the two clans separate with the oath, "All paths converge!" The new clan

takes a road that separates it from the parent clan so the two don't compete for resources.

This tradition might seem harsh, but all Vistani understand loss and separation. Another form of it appears in their coming-of-age rite. Usually at age 18, but an outsider given the Blooding might be older, a clan member is expected to leave the clan for a time. Vistani call this custom of going into the world, somewhat ironically, the Jaunt. A Vistani is expected to return from the Jaunt with something valuable for the clan. If a "jaunter" returns with something the matriarch deems beneficial, the Jaunt is successful. For most, this "valuable" is a spouse and, perhaps, children—new blood for the clan. Successful returns after 3 or 7 years are considered particularly auspicious.

For various reasons, some Vistani never return to nomadic life. Such lost ones are referred to as if they were dead. Typical jaunters keep to safe settlements, living and working in mundane ways. A few disappear due to the injustice and crime common in settled areas. However, with their unusual talents, a considerable number of Vistani become adventurers. Those who survive this risky career choice almost always return to the clan, however briefly, with their comrades in tow. Although some jaunters choose to settle down, most of those who fail to return are indeed deceased.

To a Vistani, disappearing on the Jaunt is a fine way to go. No Vistani wishes to die like some soft city-dweller, curled up in bed. Further, the Vistani believe it is ill luck to look upon another as he or she dies. Those who are ill, wounded, or aged beyond help, venture way from the clan caravan—with help if needed. The matriarch lights a candle for the departed, and when it goes out, symbolizing the end for the dying one, the clan grieves.

Religion

Although profoundly spiritual, Vistani are not particularly religious. They carry no idols, and usually those invested with divine power are the only ones to carry holy symbols. (Most divinely powered Vistani are invokers, who use no symbols.) Vistani stories sometimes mock the gods, and they rarely show notable piety—the gods are simply powerful beings, fallible and killable. In cases where divine power figures prominently in a Vistani legend, the Vistani subject is almost always someone with an extremely personal relationship to a deity or deities, such as an avenger or invoker. Or the tale's subject is or was raised as an outsider.

For instance, regardless of the Vistani respect for fate and death, they avoid worshiping the Raven Queen. They would rather escape doom and death, through guile and supernatural power, than hold either in reverence. Vistani feel similarly about extreme deities, good or evil, as well as those who represent civilization or intellectualism.

This said, Vistani pay the most respect to Avandra, Melora, and Sehanine. Avandra and Melora offer blessings to protect travelers, and Avandra embodies luck and pluck. Vistani value both traits. Sehanine is the moon, which Vistani love as a light in the darkness and a representation of the feminine. She is also the goddess of romance and trickery, both of which Vistani also revere.

Vistani, as pragmatists, have more respect for enduring powers of the world, the Feywild, and the Shadowfell. Primal spirits serve those who know their ways, as numerous Vistani do. Although fickle, fey lords also offer power and more to those who please them, as the Vistani often do. Some Vistani clans are even willing to appease or serve darker

Vistani in Your Campaign

Vistani fit into just about any typical D&D campaign, because they require no specific location to work. Even if your DM has an ongoing campaign, the Vistani can easily be dropped into a region you are just starting to explore. The Vistani might wander in as new arrivals where the PCs live.

In their older iterations, Vistani were a specific breed of powerful and wise humans. Your DM might decide that the Vistani of your campaign are similarly of one race, such as humans or halflings. Vistani also make a great pretext to integrate a race that is normally considered monstrous, such as goblins, into the mainstream without actually integrating the truly monstrous versions. Even in this case, the Vistani Heritage feat still serves to differentiate those with Vistani Heritage from those without.

Your DM might decide that the feat is only present in a portion of those who claim the heritage. You can easily rule that certain Vistani Bloodline feats are available to members of single-race Vistani even without the Vistani Heritage feat. Those feats are then little different from those that have a racial prerequisite.

If you feel Vistani should be an actual race, use this article as a guide. As a race, Vistani are likely to have +2 Int, +2 Wis, along with racial bonuses to Arcana, Nature, Will, and saving throws against fear and charm effects. What else they have, besides the racial power, is up to you and your DM.

Vistani in Forgotten Realms

In Faerûn, you have a few possibilities, depending on how established you'd like the Vistani to be. If they are an ancient people, the Vistani likely originated in the East with the fall of Raumathar and Narfell. If you decide they are all human, then Vistani resemble the folk of Rashemen, Thay, and the western Hordelands. Another option is that the Vistani are those displaced during the original fall of Netheril. Although the Bedine became nomads of this region, their history is different and their race is homogenously human. If these options don't appeal, Vistani could be much younger as a people. The Spellplague displaced thousands, and a great leader such as Vistan could have united some of these refugees into meaningful groups. Over the century since the great catastrophe, the Vistani have become identifiable nomads.

It would create a shorter list to point out where the Vistani don't fit in Faerûn. Keeping to the horror-story roots of the Vistani, they might be particularly common in Erlkazar, in the Beastlands, in the Demonlands, or even in terrifying Thay. They could be a colorful addition to the North, Sword Coast, Lands of Intrigue, and Western Heartlands. Maybe they regularly appear in Silverymoon, Neverwinter, and Waterdeep for festivals. Tethyr and its neighbors are naturals, as well. Only the most closed or inhospitable territories might exclude these nomads.

powers in the Shadowfell for the tangible benefits such an agreement might offer. Seldom is this a result of evil on the part of the Vistani—the compact is one of convenience and ensured survival. Many a Vistani tale is about a hero or heroes who free a clan from the influence of a dark overlord.

Physical Qualities

Vistani clans contain persons of various races, most of whom have little physical resemblance. Vistani share an uncanny similarity in eye color, which is glossy black. Every Vistani also has the violet scar from his or her Blooding, which other Vistani can intuitively identify. (This mark turns black on Vistani outlaws.) Otherwise, as a people, their manner, decoration, and customs unify them and set them apart from others of similar racial stock.

Playing a Vistani

Each Vistani is a complex and sometimes contradictory array of emotions and motivations. As a people, they are bold, candid, intrepid, and witty; but they can be cynical and aloof toward non-Vistani. They respect individuality and competence, knowing that life demands adaptability rather than rigid rules. As nature teaches, each situation calls for a particular action.

More than a few civilized folks consider the Vistani to be morally lax. It is true that a Vistani might lie or steal as such actions suit, especially for the sake of survival and future success. Vistani are whimsical and willing to do "small wrongs" to acquire what they desire. However, few Vistani are given to hate and cruelty, or are willing to greatly harm others without due cause. When such a reason is given, though, few are as fierce in their retaliation as a Vistani.

The relaxed nature of Vistani morality is based in an utter belief in the power of fate, and the power of an individual to escape a poor fate through wisdom and right choices. A Vistani might peddle something worthless for the coin he or she needs, knowing that only those bound by destiny to give the money shall do so. Further, only those who have ill fortune would dare rely on an untested remedy. If someone detects the deception, the Vistani peddler laughs it off and congratulates the wise one for his or her insight into the actual state of events. The peddler might even return cash to those who are upset, depending on how he or she is treated.

This derives from the fact that self-determination is universal to the Vistani psyche, as is a sense of personal accountability. A Vistani that has a grievance is honest about the problem and expects to be dealt with fairly. He or she demands respect, returns respect or lack of it in kind. Vistani promises are given sparingly, worded devilishly, but followed scrupulously. When a disagreement is resolved, a Vistani considers it a sign of weakness to hold a grudge. Anything he or she puts effort to—craftwork, forgiveness, thievery, lovemaking—is done with gusto and optimism.

As profound a personal liberty to a Vistani is a desire to rove. Few Vistani stay in one place for more than a week, or a month at the outside. Then they desire to move on and see more of the wide world. Travels likely bring a Vistani back the same way again, but Vistani blood seems to engender a desire for wayfaring and adventure.

Vistani are also mystics at heart. Each Vistani finds magical wonder in the world and feels eldritch

energy in his or her veins. Supernatural powers are common among them. Their divinations and imprecations are legendary, as is the Vistani ability to heal. Every Vistani hopes to have at least a little skill at magic.

Those who grew up wandering with a Vistani clan adopt Vistani customs of decoration, which vary from clan to clan but share some traits. Vistani like to maintain an attractive and clean appearance. One prefers only as much clothing as is necessary for comfort. What he or she wears is loosely fitted, except where intended to accentuate certain features, and brightly colored. Patterns and stripes, showing influences from numerous other cultures, are common. Vistani accessorize with veils, scarves, hats, sashes, and bandanas, as well as plenty of jewelry, feathers, and fur. Males who can grow facial hair usually do. A Vistani who has hair on his or her head often wears that hair long and pleasantly unkempt.

Vistani Characteristics: Adaptable, arcane, brazen, cunning, curious, dogged, fiery, hedonistic, impish, lively, mystical, overconfident, proud, restless, seductive, suspicious, tolerant, unconventional, vengeful

Vistani Names

Vistani have a wide array of names, including those from the various races of the world. None of these are specifically Vistani in nature. Vistani do have unique clan names that seem to come from amalgams of numerous languages.

Clan Names: Anak, Arturi, Boem, Bourdad, Canjar, Corvara, Dorok, Dyaga, Endari, Equaar, Fonso, Giomorgo, Hyskosa, Ioann, Jaell, Kaldresh, Kamii, Koorah, Lunadi, Manusa, Mishamel, Naiat, Prastonata, Rauni, Radanavik, Schalakti, Shandor, Talaitha, Tarokka, Tralak, Vardo, Vatraska, Vishnad, Yaga, Yoska, Zarovan, Zsalev

Backgrounds

Backgrounds that suggest the Vistani ways or supernatural heritage are good choices, while those that tie a character to a particular place require more creativity on your part. For instance, society backgrounds are uncommon among Vistani, since most clan members are close in wealth and station. You might be an exception—the daughter of a respected clan elder might take "Noble" to reflect her social standing and the expectations placed upon her.

Vistani PCs can also choose these background elements.

Dead One: You are Vistani, but you, your family, or your clan is settled rather than nomadic. This is very atypical for the Vistani, so much so that itinerant Vistani refer to settled ones as "dead." Was this lifestyle imposed upon you, as in the cases of exile or captivity? Is the cause just? Is it natural or supernatural? How was your relationship with the other settled natives of the area? Do you wish to return to the life of the road?

Associated Skills: Insight, Streetwise.

Vistani in Eberron

The Vistani fit well into Khorvaire, with any one of several possible background stories. Their history can be just as mysterious as it is here, rooted in the chronicle of Sarlonan humans who never settled down. Perhaps, instead, these are folk who refused to become part of Galifar, or they are nomads who originated in Droaam and spread from there. If you prefer that the Vistani have emerged more recently, they could be united refugees displaced during the Last War, much like the settlers of Q'barra but without a homeland. Vistani could be a group of Cyrans, although this option makes them unlikely to be more than an isolated and small group.

To tie Vistani to their Ravenloft origin, they can be prominent in Karrnath, Darguun, Droaam, and acknowledging adaptations needed to move among the swamps, even the Shadow Marches. The Lhazaar Principalities are another place where the Vistani can enjoy unprecedented freedom. Perhaps the Vistani brave the Eldeen Reaches and the borders of the Demon Wastes. In Thrane, they are likely to be a persecuted minority, since few Vistani indeed would accept the Silver Flame religion.

The Vistani of Eberron are much more likely to identify with the Traveler . . .

March of the Vistani

It started in 1983 with the *Ravenloft* adventure, Tracy and Laura Hickman's award-winning homage to *Dracula* for the *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons* game. In the adventure, Madam Eva and her loyal gypsies camped a little less than half a mile outside the village of Barovia as the crow flies. Somewhat like the gypsies of *Dracula,* Madam Eva's followers were mysterious instruments of fate and Strahd von Zarovich, the *Ravenloft* adventure's vampire antagonist. They served mostly as a flavorful roleplaying element by way of Madam Eva's card reading, which helped determine some of the adventure's parameters. Through Strahd's gifts, only these gypsies could leave the killing fog around the vampire's domain.

This extremely popular adventure evolved, spawning other publications such as *Master of Ravenloft, House of Strahd,* and *The House on Gryphon Hill.* It developed into the *Ravenloft* campaign setting, starting with the 1990 release of the *Realm of Terror.* In this product, the unique gypsies of the Ravenloft setting were named Vistani. Vistani appear thereafter as part of the Ravenloft canon, culminating for a time in *Expedition to Castle Ravenloft*. Vistani within *Expedition* are more like the gypsies of the original *Ravenloft* adventure, than the all-mighty mystics of the campaign setting.

Vistani were originally a tool for the DM to enhance storytelling in a gothic horror setting. These colorful nomads tell fortunes, hurl curses, and freely travel through the mists that cut Ravenloft off from the material world. (These mists, which imprison non-Vistani who travel into Ravenloft's domains, are one evolution of Strahd's deadly fog.) All these powers were treated as if every Vistani possessed at least some of them to a degree, making Vistani extremely powerful.

Vistani were so interesting, however, that D&D players naturally wanted to be able to play Vistani characters. *Van Richten's Guide to the Vistani* gave DMs and players guidelines for accomplishing this. The recommendations amounted to the limiting of native Vistani abilities. It wouldn't do to have a PC who could accurately tell the future, escape the domains of dread at will, or accomplish tasks like a plot-device NPC might. The half-Vistani PC race of later Ravenloft publications was a similar attempt to give players a taste of the Vistani without all the innate power.

This article goes a step further. Domains of dread, based on the original Ravenloft campaign setting's separate domains within the Demiplane of Dread, have been integrated into the core D&D game as aspects of the Shadowfell. These pocket dimensions of shadow, each behind a veil of entrapping mist, imprison those guilty of heinous evils. Chris Youngs, James Wyatt, and I—with help from the D&D Insider team—came up with concepts that would let the Vistani become a similar part of the game. It was my honor to add flesh to the skeleton, so to speak, paying homage to what came before, especially David Wise's remarkable *Van Richten's Guide to the Vistani*.

Vistani are a viable PC concept if the assumption of a vast array of inborn powers simply changes to another equally valid assumption that Vistani, like other characters, develop arrays of differing powers within their cultural norms and the scope of level limitations. Yes, the Vistani can do almost all of the bizarre things they could do in earlier editions of the game. Only the notion that all Vistani can innately do all these things has been removed. Added is mixed racial heritage and story support for this concept, which gives the Vistani a unique but inclusive niche in the 4e D&D world.

Even though we've given Vistani to players first, we haven't forgotten the Vistani roots as DM devices. A planned follow-up article expands on the Vistani and some of their more outlandish powers. Although these might not be good for the game in the hands of PCs, they can still be useful storytelling and adventure-building tools. It'll be up to your DM whether your Vistani PC can use some of these game elements.

World Walker: Your nomadic life has taken you on countless strange trails. You are familiar with regions of the world, the Feywild, and the Shadowfell. What path was usual for your clan? Which regions did you spend the most time in? Do you have favorable connections in some of these places? Enemies? What secrets do you know that might lead to adventure?

Associated Skills: Arcana, Nature

Adventurers

Three sample Vistani adventurers are described below.

Arturi, a halfling rogue, is an exile from the Vistani. His clan no longer walks the worlds because he allowed his rivalry with a clan-brother over a townie lady to go too far. A long story made short, Arturi betrayed his rival to goblins who used the opportunity to raid and destroy Arturi's caravan. Arturi was among the survivors who made their way to another clan. The matriarch of that clan saw that a guilty one was among the survivors, and Arturi admitted his wrongdoing. He was exiled for his crime, never to walk among those of the blood until he can redeem himself threefold for the harm he caused. Arturi fell in with adventuring heroes, who find his jaunty knife-fighting techniques and venturesome spirit more than useful. Arturi strives to do good for all folk, with a special focus on his estranged people.

Gwenyth was adopted into the Vistani as a young dwarf girl—her parents had died on the road from Hammerfast, leaving her alone in Fallcrest. From her youth, Gwenyth felt a strong affinity for the moon, which the Vistani told her was one of her mothers. She learned from the Vistani a subtlety uncommon among dwarves, and her connection to Sehanine proved to be more than fancy. Gwenyth became the student of the clan matriarch and a malediction invoker, following the traditions of fearsome Vistani execrators. She recently left her clan on her Jaunt. The tug of her dwarven nature in her heart leads her to seek worthy companions to help her show the world that tales about the Vistani aren't tall at all.

Yavril reincarnated in the midst of a Vistani camp revel, and the matriarch there considered her appearance under the full moon to be particularly auspicious for the clan. The young deva was given the Blooding immediately, and she became part of the clan. She took to the crystal balls of the Vistani readily, and arcane power flowed from her without much effort. Over the course of 7 years, she became a wizard with much potential, helping in the defense of the caravan more than once. Although she is much younger than normal for the Jaunt, she and the clan matriarch have seen that it is time for her to take up her orb and head into the wider world. Several of her clan-mates are of age as well, and they have decided to seek their fortunes together.

About the Author

Chris Sims is a mysterious person who wanders the lands and travels the mists between varied duties as a member of RPG R&D for Wizards of the Coast. He is independent of the bonds that shackle the lords to their domains and the folk to their dreary, oppressed existence. One might say he is among the strangest characters in RPG R&D, because in spirit he is free. His works include writing, development, editing, and general troublemaking for D&D Insider, as well as parts of Dungeon Master's Guide, Martial Power, Monster Manual 2, Eberron Campaign Guide and Eberron Player's Guide, and a few official D&D adventures.

Playing Vistani:
Secrets of the Caravans

By Chris Sims
Illustrations by Jason A Engle

The Vistani share their secrets—both magical and otherwise—only with those who are also vistani. Once you have been welcomed into a vistani caravan and accepted as a member, you undergo a ritual led by a vistani elder. During the ritual, some of your blood is shared with that of someone in the caravan. As your blood mingles with that of the vistani, your eyes grow dark, and you become one with the rest of the caravan, which grants you access to the feats, powers, and other options available to all vistani.

Feats

Being a Vistani means having the Vistani Heritage feat, which is a bloodline feat. All bloodline feats are noted as such in the feat's name. You can have bloodline feats of only one type, so if you choose the Vistani Heritage feat, you cannot have feats from other bloodlines (such as dhampyr). An assortment of unique bloodline feats, which require the Vistani Heritage feat, are available to Vistani.

Vistani Heritage [Vistani Bloodline]

Prerequisite: Humanoid race

Benefit: You gain *evil eye of the Vistani* as an encounter power. Additionally, you gain a +2 bonus to Diplomacy checks made against other Vistani. You have mastered the Vistani Blooding ritual and can perform it.

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Evil Eye of the Vistani Feat Power

You cast a baleful look upon your enemy, forcing it to cower before you.

Encounter ✦ Charm
Minor Action **Ranged** 10
Target: One creature
Attack: Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma + 3 vs. Will
Level 11: Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma + 6 vs. Will
Level 21: Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma + 9 vs. Will
Hit: Until the end of your next turn, the target grants combat advantage to you and cannot willingly move closer to you.

Heroic Tier Feats

These feats are available to any character who meets the prerequisites. They are meant, in a way, to be a guide to common class and feature choices among heroic Vistani. Some allow you to master certain rituals as if you had the Ritual Caster feat or make alchemical items as if you had the Alchemist feat. To perform a ritual, you must still acquire the ritual and master it; to make an alchemical item, you must still acquire the formula and learn it. Your level still limits whether you can perform a ritual or make an alchemical item. The DM can modify the list of rituals and alchemical items available to you as he or she sees fit.

Advantageous Eye [Vistani Bloodline]

Prerequisite: Vistani Heritage

Benefit: When you hit a target with your *evil eye of the Vistani*, the target grants combat advantage to all your allies for the duration of the power.

Black Vistani Cat [Familiar, Vistani Bloodline]

Prerequisite: Any arcane class, cat familiar, Vistani Heritage

Benefit: Your *evil eye of the Vistani* can originate from your active cat familiar. Using *evil eye of the Vistani* in this way does not provoke opportunity attacks.

Cosmic Eye [Vistani Bloodline]

Prerequisite: Sorcerer, Cosmic Magic class feature, Vistani Heritage

Benefit: *Evil eye of the Vistani* deals fire and radiant damage equal to your Cosmic Power damage bonus.

Covenant Eye [Vistani Bloodline]

Prerequisite: Channel Divinity class feature, Vistani Heritage

Benefit: As a free action, you can expend your use of your Channel Divinity class feature to regain the use of *evil eye of the Vistani*.

Enmity's Eye [Vistani Bloodline]

Prerequisite: Avenger, Vistani Heritage

Benefit: When you use *evil eye of the Vistani* against your *oath of enmity* target, you do not provoke opportunity attacks from that target. If no other enemy is adjacent to you when you do so, you make two attack rolls, taking either result. If you hit, you deal 1d6 radiant damage in addition to the power's normal hit effect.

Eye of Paranoia [Vistani Bloodline]

Prerequisite: Vistani Heritage

Benefit: When you hit a target with your *evil eye of the Vistani*, the target cannot make opportunity attacks or immediate action attacks for the duration of the power.

Eye Wand [Vistani Bloodline]

Prerequisite: Wizard, Wand of Accuracy class feature, Vistani Heritage

Benefit: If you miss with an attack roll modified by your Wand of Accuracy class feature, you can use *evil eye of the Vistani*, if available, as a free action against the target you missed.

Fell Vistani Hound [Vistani Bloodline]

Prerequisite: Ranger, wolf beast companion, Beast Mastery class feature, Vistani Heritage

Benefit: While you are flanking an enemy, your wolf has combat advantage against that enemy.

Maledictor's Eye [Vistani Bloodline]

Prerequisite: Invoker, Covenant of Malediction class feature, Vistani Heritage

Benefit: When you hit a target with *evil eye of the Vistani*, you can slide the target 1 square. Until the end of your next turn, whenever the target misses with an attack roll, you can slide the target 1 square as a free action.

Nature's Vindictive Eye [Vistani Bloodline]

Prerequisite: Druid, Wild Shape class feature, Vistani Heritage

Benefit: You can use *evil eye of the Vistani* while in beast form as a minor action that does not provoke opportunity attacks.

Orb of the Eye [Vistani Bloodline]

Prerequisite: Wizard, Orb of Imposition class feature, Vistani Heritage

Benefit: You treat *evil eye of the Vistani* as though it were an at-will wizard spell for the purposes of your Orb of Imposition.

Vestige of Vistan [Vistani Bloodline]

Prerequisite: Warlock, vestige pact, Vistani Heritage

Benefit: You add Vistan to your primary vestiges, gaining access to the following pact boon when Vistan is your active vestige.

Vistan Pact Boon: When an enemy under the effect of your Warlock's Curse drops to 0 hit points, you can slide a different creature currently affected by your Warlock's Curse a number of squares equal to your Intelligence modifier.

Eyes of the Vestige Augment (Vistan): You slide the target 1 square.

Warlock's Eye [Vistani Bloodline]

Prerequisite: Warlock, Vistani Heritage

Benefit: When you hit with *evil eye of the Vistani,* you can add the extra damage from your Warlock's Curse, even if you have already used your extra curse damage this turn.

Vestige of Vistan

The vestige of Vistan has a nebulous feel—varied emotions, indeterminate gender, and so on—shaped by the many myths surrounding this legendary Vistani figure. The vestige might not be a specific entity, but instead it could be a blend of power gathered from Vistani collective belief and mysticism. Contact with this vestige leads to a desire to move and to capricious behavior. Vistani often call the triggering of the pact boon the "dance of Vistan."

Vistani Fencer [Vistani Bloodline]

Prerequisite: Vistani Heritage

Benefit: You gain a +4 bonus to damage rolls with melee or close attacks with a light blade or a heavy blade against a target currently affected by your *evil eye of the Vistani*.

Vistani Guardian [Vistani Bloodline]

Prerequisite: Vistani Heritage

Benefit: You can master and perform binding or warding rituals as though you had the Ritual Caster feat. Once per day, you can ignore the component cost of a binding or warding ritual your have mastered of your level or lower.

Vistani Healer [Vistani Bloodline]

Prerequisite: Vistani Heritage

Benefit: You can master and perform restoration rituals as though you had the Ritual Caster feat. Once per day, you can ignore the component cost of a restoration ritual you have mastered of your level or lower.

Vistani Jongleur [Vistani Bloodline]

Prerequisite: Vistani Heritage

Benefit: You can master and perform Bard rituals as though you had the Ritual Caster feat. Once per day, you can ignore the component cost of a ritual you have mastered of your level or lower that has Bard as a prerequisite.

Vistani Knife Fighting [Vistani Bloodline]

Prerequisite: Vistani Heritage

Benefit: When you miss the target of your *evil eye of the Vistani* with a melee or close attack with a light blade, you can choose to either shift 1 square or move your speed as a free action.

Vistani Pathfinder [Vistani Bloodline]

Prerequisite: Vistani Heritage

Benefit: You can master and perform exploration and travel rituals as though you had the Ritual Caster feat. Once per day, you can ignore the component cost of an exploration or travel ritual you have mastered of your level or lower.

Vistani Seer [Vistani Bloodline]

Prerequisite: Vistani Heritage

Benefit: You can master and perform divination and scrying rituals as though you had the Ritual Caster feat. Once per day, you can ignore the component cost of a divination or scrying ritual you have mastered of your level or lower.

Vistani Thief [Vistani Bloodline]

Prerequisite: Vistani Heritage

Benefit: You can master and perform deception rituals as though you had the Ritual Caster feat. Once per day, you can ignore the component cost of a deception ritual you have mastered of your level or lower.

Wild Magic Eye [Vistani Bloodline]

Prerequisite: Sorcerer, Wild Magic class feature, Vistani Heritage

Benefit: *Evil eye of the Vistani* deals damage of the same type as your current Wild Soul damage type, and the damage is equal to your Chaos Power damage bonus.

Paragon Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of 11th level or higher who meets the prerequisites.

Mark of the Evil Eye [Vistani Bloodline]

Prerequisite: 11th level, fighter, Vistani Heritage

Benefit: Whenever you would make an attack as the result of your Combat Challenge feature, you can use *evil eye of the Vistani*, if available, on the same target as a free action without provoking opportunity attacks before making your attack.

Prophetic Preparation [Vistani Bloodline]

Prerequisite: 11th level, wizard, Vistani Heritage

Benefit: Once per day, as a free action, you can swap one daily attack spell you didn't prepare in place of one you did prepare. Also once per day, as a free action, you can swap one utility spell you didn't prepare in place of one you did prepare. You choose the replacement spell at the time you use it.

Epic Tier Feats

Any feat in this section is available to a character of 21st level or higher who meets the prerequisites.

Persistent Eye [Vistani Bloodline]

Prerequisite: 21st level, Vistani Heritage

Benefit: : Instead of lasting until the end of your next turn, the target of your *evil eye of the Vistani* grants you combat advantage and cannot willingly move closer to you (save ends).

Vistani Foresight [Vistani Bloodline]

Prerequisite: 21st level, Vistani Heritage

Benefit: You gain +2 to initiative. Additionally, you gain an additional action point after an extended rest.

Paragon Path

Vistani heroes vary widely in their pursuits, but the Vistani execrator is distinct to Vistani culture.

Vistani Execrator

"I am the lurking sickness in your veins, the lurking fear in your mind, and the lurking stain on your soul. From me you'll receive no less than you deserve."

Prerequisite: Any arcane class or Covenant of Malediction class feature, Vistani Heritage

Rumor and legend speak of horrifying Vistani curses. Few are willing to put these dark parables to the test. Threat of ill fortune or a wasting disease is enough to keep the Vistani safe from numerous threats

Folk do well to heed the folktales, because the stories are true. Of this fact you are living proof.

Although many a Vistani knows the magic to place a lasting curse on someone who has offended the clan, you are something more. In an instant, with but a glare and an oath, you can turn fortune against your adversaries. Those who dare raise their hands against you soon see the folly of their actions.

Any who show you the respect and camaraderie you deserve have little to fear. While standing beside you or watching your back, your allies benefit from the bad luck you hurl at your foes. They could even say that you bring them good fortune instead of afflicting enemies. Despite the reality, with a sly Vistani smile, you might let them believe this is true.

Vistani Execrator Features

Cursed Action (11th level): When you spend an action point to make an attack, you gain combat advantage against each of your targets.

Sight Beyond Sight (11th level): Whenever an effect would blind you, you can make one saving throw to remove that effect as a free action, even if that effect doesn't normally allow a save. Additionally, you ignore concealment for any creature within 5 squares of you.

Master of the Vistani Curse (16th level): You can use *evil eye of the Vistani* one additional time per encounter.

Vistani Execrator Powers

Isolating Curse — Vistani Execrator Attack 11

You lay an imprecation on your adversary, driving its friends too far away to offer protection and opening your foe to attack.

Encounter ✦ Implement, Psychic
Standard Action **Ranged** 10
Primary Target: One creature
Primary Attack: Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma vs. Will
Hit: 2d8 + Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma modifier psychic damage. Until the end of your next turn, the target grants combat advantage, and any enemy within 3 squares of the target takes a –4 penalty to attack rolls and cannot regain hit points.

Fumbling Curse — Vistani Execrator Utility 12

With a word, you turn a sure strike into a glancing blow that momentarily throws your opponent off balance.

Daily
Immediate Interrupt **Personal**
Trigger: An enemy hits or misses you with an attack
Effect: Whenever the target makes an attack roll (including the attack roll that triggered this power), roll 1d6 and subtract the result from the target's attack (save ends).

Deadly Repercussions — Vistani Execrator Attack 20

Your curse attracts doom to your enemies, and it rewards with continued pain their insolent attacks against you and your allies.

Daily ✦ Implement, Psychic
Standard Action **Close** burst 2
Target: Each enemy in burst
Attack: Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma vs. Will
Hit: 3d8 + Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma modifier psychic damage.
Miss: Half damage.
Effect: The target grants combat advantage and has ongoing 10 damage (save ends both). Until the target saves against this effect, once each turn when the target hits an ally, roll 1d6. The target takes a penalty to saving throws equal to the result of this roll until the end of your next turn.

About the Author

Chris Sims is a mysterious person who wanders the lands and travels the mists between varied duties as a member of RPG R&D for Wizards of the Coast. He is independent of the bonds that shackle the lords to their domains and the folk to their dreary, oppressed existence. One might say he is among the strangest characters in RPG R&D, because in spirit he is free. His works include writing, development, editing, and general troublemaking for *D&D Insider*, as well as parts of *Dungeon Master's Guide*®, *Martial Power*™, *Monster Manual 2*®, *Eberron Campaign Guide*® and *Eberron Player's Guide*®, and a few official D&D® adventures.

Playing Vistani: Magic and Mystery

By Chris Sims
Illustrations by Jason A Engle

The Vistani are often masters of ritual magic. Their elders have traveled the planes for decades and have accumulated the knowledge of races and cultures that have since vanished from the planes. Their mystical knowledge is passed only to those who are worthy of their trust—typically only members of a Vistani caravan.

Rituals

These rituals are common among the Vistani, and every Vistani clan has a number of ritualists among its members. Your DM might expand the rituals available to you or how they work, especially with reference to curses, divination, and travel.

Comrades' Succor

Ritual participants share their vitality and luck with one another.

Level: 1
Category: Restoration
Time: 5 minutes
Duration: Instantaneous
Component Cost: 10 gp
Market Price: 150 gp
Key Skill: Heal (no check)

While performing this ritual, you and up to 5 participants in the ritual can choose to lose any number of healing surges and select another participant to gain an equal number of healing surges. No participant can have more healing surges than his or her daily maximum. Additionally, you or one participant must lose 1 healing surge when performing this ritual.

Ghost Walk

You touch a jeweled heel bone to the ritual subjects, making them fade partially from the world so they can travel like shades of the dead.

Level: 9
Category: Travel
Time: 10 minutes
Duration: 8 hours
Component Cost: 325 gp, plus a focus worth 100 gp
Market Price: 800 gp
Key Skill: Arcana or Religion (no check)

You and up to 8 allies that participate in the ritual seem ghostly. Subjects gain a +5 bonus to Stealth checks, and the group treats its tracks as if they had been obscured. The ritual's effects end if any of its subjects dismisses it as a standard action, takes a rest, attacks, or is hit by an attack.

Focus: The graven heel bone of a deceased humanoid, set with jet and platinum.

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Hunter's Blessing

You use supernatural sight to detect the spiritual emanations left by creatures passing through the area.

Level: 5
Category: Divination
Time: 10 minutes
Component Cost: 50 gp
Market Price: 250 gp
Key Skill: Arcana, Nature, or Religion

Duration: 24 hours

After enacting this ritual, you can use one of the key skills instead of Perception to track a target you can visualize or name specifically, such as "The orcs that attacked Nenlast." If you have a material link to your quarry, such as a lock of hair, you gain a +2 bonus to your checks.

Hunter's Curse

You level your will against your pursuers, hindering their chase.

Level: 3
Category: Binding
Time: 10 minutes
Component Cost: 50 gp
Market Price: 250 gp
Key Skill: Arcana, Nature, or Religion

Duration: 8 hours

A creature or creatures you can specifically name or visualize are hindered in overland travel. You make your skill check and designate a single target or group that you can visualize or name specifically. The target or leader of the target's group must make an Endurance or Nature check, with a DC equal to the result of the check you made when casting this ritual. If the target fails its Endurance or Nature check, the group's overland speed is reduced by 2 for the duration of the ritual.

Spirit Fetch

You call forth an insubstantial spirit—fey, primal, or shadow—to unpleasantly influence another to do your bidding.

Level: 2
Category: Exploration
Time: 10 minutes
Component Cost: 20 gp
Market Price: 50 gp
Key Skill: Arcana or Religion

Duration: Special

When complete, this ritual calls forth a spiritual presence, or "fetch," of a shape you define. Typically, these fetches are small, indistinct, and shaped like a small animal or person. You can send this spirit to a creature (or creatures) whose specific appearance you can visualize or whose name you can provide, or to whom you have a material connection such as a vial of blood. You whisper a simple command of 10 words of less, such as "Come to me," "Bring me the ritual components," or "Burn down the fortress wall."

The fetch then goes to find the creature you designated at a rapid pace (speed 15) and seeks out the creature you specify. It cannot communicate, but the recipient senses its presence and receives your command. Unless the recipient does as you wish, the fetch remains at the target's side as a constant reminder. The fetch cannot be harmed, but *dispel magic* used successfully can drive it away for a day.

Your skill check result determines how long the fetch exists.

Check Result	Duration
19 or lower	12 hours
20-29	1 day
30-39	1 week
40 or higher	1 month

Vistani Passkey

With a sprinkle of residuum, you make a common tool or key particularly potent for the current situation.

Level: 5
Category: Creation
Time: Standard action
Component Cost: 100 gp, plus a focus worth 100 gp
Market Price: 250 gp
Key Skill: Arcana (no check)

Duration: See below

You examine a lock or trap as part of the ritual and sprinkle *residuum* on the focus (see below). After enacting this ritual, you can use the focus to make a Thievery check with a +5 bonus on the lock or trap you examined. Even if you fail by 5 or more, you cannot set off a trap with a check augmented by the bonus from this ritual.

Focus: An ornate key or thieves' tool worth 100 gp.

Magic Items

Vistani folk items focus on protection and music.

Vistani Buzuq — Level 7

Music plucked from this long-necked, fretted lute soothes the worn and weary, especially those who keep time with the tune.

Wondrous Item 2,600 gp

Property: Bards can use this item as an implement for bard powers and bard paragon path powers. As an implement, it grants a +2 enhancement bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls, and it deals 2d6 extra damage on a critical hit.

Power (Daily): Use this power during a short rest. You gain the benefits of the *Comrade's Succor* ritual without having to pay the component cost.

Vistani Eye Amulet — Level 2+

A large tiger-eye jewel serves as this item's pendant. The jewel sometimes moves like an actual eye, and it helps you discharge eye-related effects.

Lvl 2	+1	520 gp	Lvl 17	+4	65,000 gp
Lvl 7	+2	2.600 gp	Lvl 22	+5	325,000 gp
Lvl 12	+3	13,000 gp	Lvl 27	+6	1,625,000 gp

Item Slot: Neck

Enhancement: Fortitude, Reflex, and Will

Property: You gain an item bonus to saving throws equal to the enhancement bonus against effects imposed by attacks that have the gaze keyword, that originate in the attacker's eye or eyes (DM discretion), or that affect your eyes or sight.

Power (Daily): Free Action. You make a saving throw to end an effect against which this item grants a bonus to saving throws even if a save cannot normally end the effect. If you save, the effect ends.

Vistani Tambourine — Level 2

A tiny drum with ringing jingles, or zils, this instrument helps you keep a lively tempo despite difficulty.

Wondrous Item 520 gp

Property: Bards can use this item as an implement for bard powers and bard paragon path powers. As an implement, it grants a +1 enhancement bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls, and it deals 1d6 extra damage on a critical hit.

Power (Encounter): Move Action. You and any ally within 5 squares of you ignore difficult terrain until the end of your next turn, and you move your speed.

Vistani Violin — Level 12

This fiddle looks well used, but sturdy and merry. Its tune brings forth strong emotions, inspiring resolute action.

Wondrous Item 13,000 gp

Property: Bards can use this item as an implement for bard powers and bard paragon path powers. As an implement, it grants a +3 enhancement bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls, and it deals 3d6 extra damage on a critical hit.

Power (Daily): Standard Action. Use this power during a rest. At the end of the rest, you and any ally who remained within 20 squares of you during the rest gain a +1 power bonus to attack rolls and all defenses during the surprise round and first round of the first encounter to occur after the rest.

Song of Rest: The bonus increases to +2.

About the Author

Chris Sims is a mysterious person who wanders the lands and travels the mists between varied duties as a member of RPG R&D for Wizards of the Coast. He is independent of the bonds that shackle the lords to their domains and the folk to their dreary, oppressed existence. One might say he is among the strangest characters in RPG R&D, because in spirit he is free. His works include writing, development, editing, and general troublemaking for *D&D Insider*, as well as parts of *Dungeon Master's Guide®*, *Martial Power™*, *Monster Manual 2®*, *Eberron Campaign Guide®* and *Eberron Player's Guide®*, and a few official D&D® adventures.

Rediscovering Sigil

By Michele Carter and Bill Slavicsek

Illustrations byHoward Lyon

Michele: When the RPG R&D team leads first started talking about the *Dungeon Master's Guide 2* outline, we knew we wanted to include a sample city, much like Fallcrest in the first *Dungeon Master's Guide*. Sigil had been mentioned before as an option, and it was Mike Mearls who officially championed the idea when it came down to the decision. I provided an enthusiastic "seconded!", and the motion passed without much further debate. We'd already established Sigil as having a place in the 4th Edition cosmology (I remember needling James Wyatt for a paragraph to make sure it was mentioned in the first *DMG*), so presenting the city as a paragon-tier "home base" was a natural next step.

Bill: I volunteered to take on the 47-page section that was devoted to paragon campaigns and the *City of Doors*. I had some past experience with the *Planescape* setting, and I was always a big fan of Sigil in particular. Michele pulled together a bunch of research material and helped me outline the section, then I started writing.

Michele: Getting my fingers into Sigil again was like coming home. It'd been over ten years since I worked on the *Planescape* line, but it wasn't difficult at all to return to the mindset. Although the structure of the cosmology had changed, the city still fit snugly in the "center" (from a certain point of view) as the City of Doors, a gateway to everywhere, and the premier planar crossroads bar none. It still features portals that need gate-keys, improbable alliances, and (of course) razorvine, cranium rats, and the Lady of Pain.

Bill: Some of the flavor and makeup of the planar setting needed a little adjustment to make it fit into the new D&D approach to the multiverse. Take gate-towns, for example. In the original setting, these locations sat along the edge of the Outlands and provided access to the various planes. Each one took on the flavor of the plane it was attached to. Since we no longer utilize the Outlands, I decided to spread the cool concept of the gate-towns to everywhere. Whether in the natural world or on any of the planes of existence, a gate-town can appear around any known portal to someplace else. The gate-town and the countryside around it reflect the nature and reality of whatever waits on the other side of the portal.

Michele: That's the kind of tweak we used to bring Sigil and other *Planescape* elements firmly into 4th Edition. Sharp-eyed, long-time readers will recognize a few other modifications in this vein, but I was very pleased with how few changes turned out to be needed to make it work. We were able to import the feel of the original material without losing the core of what made Sigil so compelling.

Bill: The trick was to include enough material to give a sense of the place and to do it justice, while fully realizing that there was never going to be enough space to cover everything to the level that we'd like. I wanted to make sure I was true to the spirit and history of Sigil. We had about as much space as was devoted to Sigil in the original *Planescape* boxed set, but nowhere near as much space as the volume of material that followed that product. I tried to capture the feel of Sigil while fitting it into the new cosmology. I left out most of the special language of the original campaign setting in favor of our more

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conversational approach to writing, but I had a few of the characters use the cant when they speak in the adventure material.

Michele: I wrote the two-page "Faces of Sigil" spread. That's not the interesting thing. The interesting thing is when I wrote it—back in 1997, when the *Planescape* team was working on a project called *City of Doors*, meant to follow *Faction War*. As it happened, some of the material from *City of Doors* was integrated into *Faction War*, but not all of it. One of the "lost" pieces was a 30-page section I had been compiling that listed all of the Sigil residents noted throughout the *Planescape* game line. When Managing Editor Kim Mohan and I were wrangling *Dungeon Master's Guide 2* into shape, I realized that with a little bit of nip-and-tuck, we could free up two more pages for Sigil. And I just happened to have kept all the *City of Doors* files ... on floppy disc. Thankfully, I had a computer that could still access the files, so with a little bit of translation work—and some small amount of updating—those two pages were ready to go.

Bill: I made sure that some of my favorites made it into the material, including Estavan of the Planar Trade Consortium.

Michele: I picked out my favorites to include as well, with an eye toward those with interlocking storylines and potential use as PC resources.

Bill: We had to decide how we wanted to handle the history of Sigil, and we ended up with the position that all of the products and adventures produced for 2nd Edition happened in Sigil's past, including the Faction War.

Michele: It's been an undetermined number of years since the Faction War, and the scars inflicted by that event haven't entirely healed. Sigil is very much in a period of transition as people wait to see (or scheme to create) who or what will rise as the next great power group. Those with a deep knowledge of Sigil's history remember that centuries ago, before the Great Upheaval, the guilds and their mercantile interests held the keys to the city's strength and stability. Some wonder if the pendulum is swinging back that way, given the new prominence of the Mutual Trade Association. Certainly power players like Shemeshka and Estavan make no secret of the fact that they hope to replace the factions as the de facto authority in Sigil—barring the Lady of Pain, of course. (Zadara, as usual, keeps her own council.) Whether they can parlay their current dominance into a lasting structure, only time will tell.

Bill: This was fun to put together, and I can't wait for us to find a product to devote more fully to the City of Doors. Planar adventuring is part of the core D&D experience now and not a separate campaign, and products such as *Manual of the Planes*, *The Plane Below: Secrets of the Elemental Chaos*, and *The Plane Above: Secrets of the Astral Sea* all help expand play beyond the natural world. I'm sure we'll tackle Sigil in a larger manner when the time is right.

Michele: I'd like to give a shout-out to my former *Planescape* conspirators: Monte Cook, Ray Vallese, Colin McComb, and everyone else who helped shape the city of Sigil. Do the *Planescape* twist again, like you did twelve summers ago ....

About the Authors

Michele Carter is the Lead Editor for Dungeons & Dragons®. Her most recent credits include *Dungeon Master's Guide® 2* and *Player's Handbook® 2*.

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Reality Star in Fantasy

BY SHELLY MAZZANOBLE
illustrations by William O'Conner

It was a typical Monday afternoon in the office when my boss stopped by my desk.

"Would you like to play in an all-girl D&D game?" she asked.

"Of course!" I said. How fun would that be. I mean, no offense to my all-male current group, but I wouldn't mind a side of estrogen with my initiative.

"Excellent!" she answered. "You'll make a great DM. I'm really looking forward to it!"

I'll make a what?

"Umm, Lulu," I asked, following her to her desk. "Might I remind you of the last time I tried DMing? Or better yet, feel free to read the transcripts from my therapy sessions."

Lulu giggled. "I think you might be over-thinking this a bit."

"But I don't want to be a Dungeon Master!" I shouted.

How often is that heard around offices in corporate America?

It was no use. The invites went out. "3G Official Weekly Team Meeting." (3G meaning Girls' Game Group.)

"We should paint a sign and hang it over the conference room doorknob when we play!" the ex-cheerleader and ceaselessly-spunky Marcella cheered.

"With our logo on it!" Tolena suggested. She's someone I'd want in my adventuring party in real life because she's usually pragmatic. She's also a mother, so I know her pockets would always be filled with Handi-Wipes and Oyster Crackers.

When I get three or more people around a table, I start obsessing over menus and playlists and napkin rings!

"That's part of my problem! When I get three or more people around a table, I start obsessing over menus and playlists and napkin rings! That, coupled with the fact I'm terrified of ruining everyone's good time, makes me a terrible Dungeon Master. I'll probably need to go on sick leave."

"We're playing on Monday afternoons," she said, walking off to a meeting. "Clear your schedule."

"We have a logo?" The quiet and secretly hilarious Hilary asked.

"I'm having the design team work one up," Lulu said.

Their enthusiasm was contagious. I even cheered for the logo. But listening to them chatter made me feel worse. Their first-ever brush with D&D would be

under my tutelage. Isn't that a lot of pressure for a new DM?

I was still thinking about this the next time my regular group met.

"What's wrong with you?" New DM asked me. "You're paying attention. You're taking your damage. You're not making up magical articles of clothing Tabitha is allegedly wearing that add +30 to her attack rolls. You're creeping me out!"

"Sorry, New DM," I admitted. "I'm trying to generate some good karma. Lulu is making me DM."

"Awesome!" he said, laughing.

Ugh. I could already taste my own medicine.

"Don't you remember what happened to me last time? I was practically institutionalized."

"You're an old pro now," he said ... and then had to pause while he stifled another laugh. "No, seriously. If you want help, you can practice on me."

"And me," Marty said.

"And me," Bart added, always eager for a chance to play D&D. Even a practice game with me at the helm.

Regardless of their intentions, it was a good idea, so I took them up on the offer. I also took Bart's copy of *Dungeon Delve*, which proved to be a stroke of genius for a beginner DM. Not that I *wanted* R&D to do all the work but ... oh, who am I fooling? Of course I did! All I had to do was pick up some *Dungeon Tiles* from the product room, riffle through New DM's collection of minis, and read a couple paragraphs out loud. Maybe this wouldn't be so bad.

I had the guys make up 1st-level characters.

"Don't forget you're new to D&D," I said. "So try to ask questions you think they'll ask so I can be prepared." "Why doesn't a tie go to the player?" New DM asked.

"If I have more than one daily in my spellbook, why can't I use them both?" Bart asked.

"Can I use any of my modifiers to boost my AC if I'm not wearing any armor?" Marty asked.

"I don't know, Marty!" I shouted. "I'm a terrible DM!"

"They'll never ask that," New DM said. "At least not during the first game."

"You'll do fine," Bart said. "You know plenty."

Sure. About cooking, and pit bulls, and '80s sitcoms. But monster abilities and running encounters and setting traps? Not my forte. "Why can't I devise skill challenges that involve naming one-hit wonders of the past decade?"

We looked more like a Junior League meeting than a band of adventurers ready to set out on their first encounter.

"Because that's not D&D," Marty laughed. "As fun as it sounds."

"You'll do fine," New DM said. "Just be yourself."

Upon walking to my desk Monday morning, I was greeted with various 3Gers chittering outside Lulu's cubicle. It wasn't surprising to find them there—we're all friends. What was unusual was that they were talking about.

"Anita was pissed!" Marcy said. "She was like, '*That's my man, you big ugly ho-faced tiefling! Who do you think you're messing with*'?"

"And LaFawnda wasn't having any of that," Tolena added. "Especially from a twerp like her. But then we became best friends and drinking buddies."

"Sounds like a fun weekend," I said. Maybe they'd have to testify in court about it and wouldn't be able to make the game this afternoon.

"We're working on our back story," Tolena said.

"For the game today!" Marcy said. "We're super excited!"

"Cool," I said, feeling anything but. Guess I knew what I'd be reading at lunch.

"Yeah!" Lulu cheered. "You're all going down! Oh wait, we're supposed to be a team, aren't we? Sorry." Some people apparently have a hard time grasping the concept of playing *cooperatively* as opposed to competitively.

They showed up early, bearing cheese trays, pepperoni, and crackers. We looked more like a Junior League meeting than a band of adventurers ready to set out on their first encounter. Part of my practice game taught me that new players don't need to pay attention to 80% of what's on their character sheets. To that point, I give them all highlighters and asked them to mark the important stuff: Initiative, defenses, speed, ability check modifiers, skill check modifiers, and hit points.

"What about our height and weight?" Hilary asked.

"Not important," I said.

"I like this game already," she smiled.

Next, we got acquainted. I wrote their names, classes, and races on the whiteboard:

Kayan Pepper, Deva Cleric (Hilary)

Ruby, Half-Elf Paladin (Lulu)

Anita Goodman, Halfling Rogue (Marcy)

LaFawnda, Tiefling Wizard (Tolena)

Because all good adventures start out in a bar (and because I know these ladies and want them to feel comfortable in their new surroundings), we begin in a tavern in the middle of a small, beautiful town called "Shallowfell."

"You notice everyone here is exceptionally beautiful in a manufactured sort of way. But no one appears happy. For one thing, they're not eating. Just drinking clear beverages. Probably Zimas."

"Are we in college?" Hilary asked.

"The waiter brings you an appetizer sampler and a pitcher of beer compliments of the friendly dwarf gentleman behind the bar. When you look at him, he gives you a thumbs up and says, 'Enjoy'!"

"Hmm ... I don't know about this," Hilary warned. "What if he's trying to poison us?"

"One of us can't drink," Lulu said, matter of factly. "If he slipped us something, the sober one can protect us."

"I'll do it," Marcy offered. "Anita needs to lay off the hooch anyway."

While they enjoyed their complimentary beer, the friendly dwarf made his way to their table.

"Ladies!" he greeted them. "So nice to see some real women in this place. Clearly you're not from around here?"

They shook their heads.

I continued with the story printed in *Dungeon Delve* ...

"This kindly dwarf tells you how a couple dozen volunteers set off on a quest for riches but they, along with the mayor's militia members sent to investigate, have gone missing." I looked up just as Marcy attempted to stifle a yawn.

"Sorry," she said. "Long day."

"Wait. Who sent the militia miners?" Tolena asked. "I'm confused."

"Are they good or bad?" Hilary questioned.

"Did anyone see Lady Gaga on Saturday Night Live?" Lulu asked.

"She's gross," Marcy said.

"The poor man's Christina Aguilera," Tolena added.

"Is there such a thing?" Hilary asked.

Uh oh. There's nothing in this delve about Christina or Lady Gaga. Was I losing them already?

I'm sure he packed healing potions, peanut butter sandwiches, and a handwritten note on a napkin bidding good luck in her rucksack.

Seconds before breaking out in hives, bits and pieces of advice from other DMs floated before my eyes. *Have fun. Play to your players. Be yourself.* Technically, my girls should have been fighting kobolds, but they wouldn't know a kobold from a Toblerone. If kobolds didn't light their fires, I'd give them something that would.

"The mine has been taken over by the shallowest of all," the dwarf explained. "It's lovely up there. A cinematographer's dream. But a dastardly gnome by the name of Ryan Seacrest and his band of squatters have taken over the place."

"Unacceptable," Lulu said. She's a landlord and can relate to this plight.

"I can offer you 40 gold pieces to help rid the place of those nasty Shallowites," the dwarf offered.

"What's the exchange rate into dollars?" asked Marcy.

"Forty gold pieces is a lot," Hilary said. "Especially for our first adventure." She's clearly been tutored by her D&D-playing husband. I'm sure he packed *healing potions*, peanut butter sandwiches, and a handwritten note on a napkin bidding good luck in her rucksack.

Regardless, they accepted the dwarf's generous offer and headed off on their first adventure.

Arriving at the mine, the group was faced with an 8-foot-high fence and an expanse of rubble piled 5 feet high. "You hear sounds coming from the other side," I explained. "Glasses tinkling, wine coolers pouring, lots of 'OMGs' and 'totallys'."

"Sounds fabulous," Tolena said. "I can't wait to kill them all."

See what I mean about knowing your audience?

Five failed Athletics checks later, they were still on the wrong side of the fence and I was beginning to understand how Bob and Jillian feel on *The Biggest Loser*. When Ruby's turn rolled around again, I buffed up her check just to get at least one of them over.

"What do you see?" the rest of the group asked.

What she saw is arguably the most irritating family in the history of families spreading their superficial selves all over the kindly dwarf's family mine. Additionally, she noticed a staircase and an

excavation pit at the far end of the chamber, but that's not nearly as important.

"You see lots of big hair, large derrières, and a scary creature whose gender you question. You're pretty sure he was a man until eleven plastic surgeries made his face look like bubblegum melting on a scorching sidewalk."

"Bruce Jenner?"

"That's right," I said. "The Kardashian family has moved into the mine. Roll for initiative!"

They whooped! They banged their fists! Slices of pepperoni hit the walls. (Sorry, Facilities. We'll clean that up later, OK?)

The older sisters (Kim, Kourtney, and Khloe, if you're going to pretend you don't know) played the role of slingers. The rest of the family filled the roles of minions. Unfortunately for the group, the slinger sisters went first. "Those of you standing on the other side of the fence see what looks like balloons careening toward you." Might as well take even more liberties with what the book described as "special ammunition."

"You hit me with pee?" she asked.

"I didn't. They did."

That was enough to motivate everyone to get over the fence. Everyone except Hilary's athletically challenged cleric.

"Uh, ladies?" Hilary said. "A little help, please?"

The fight ensued, with the Kardashian minions getting offed right and left.

"Mama Kardashian bites it," I said. "Bruce is devastated but still standing."

"Really?" Lulu asked. "Because he just looks surprised to me."

"He can't help that."

When the slingers went again, they targeted LaFawnda.

"Ew," they taunted. "What are you wearing? That's so last season!" They laughed like the harpies they are while dropping three flaming paper sacks of poo on her.

"Are you kidding?" Tolena shouted. "I'm covered in poo?"

"What's wrong with you?" Lulu asked me. "Do you have to be an eight-year-old boy to be a Dungeon Master?"

I could tell they were panicking, but instead of feeling the familiar dread and anxiety I normally felt in this situation, I was energized.

"Does 15 hit your Armor Class?" I asked Marcy.

"It ties, so no?"

Oh boy. The conflict.

"I'm really sorry," I said, "but the balloon hits, covering you in what looks and smells suspiciously like pee."

"Twelve points of ongoing fire damage, please," I smiled. She, the rogue, and the ranger were bloodied, and the cleric was still behind the fence.

More rounds and more bloodied PCs later, the cleric finally managed to climb the fence, just in time. I could tell they were panicking, but instead of feeling the familiar dread and anxiety I normally felt in this situation, I was energized. Between the four of them, their hit points barely reached double digits, and I still had two minions and all three wicked sisters standing. Was that a TPK I saw in the distance?

And then I thought about my first time playing D&D. What it was like to cast my first *magic missile*. How it felt seeing one of my party members take a hit. How attached to Astrid I was before I ever rolled a d20. What would my impression of D&D be if my first character bit it an hour into my first game?

So when Anita missed a minion, I gave it to her. When the slingers more than beat Ruby's Armor Class, I subtracted a bit. And when a javelin was set to knock the poo-covered wizard prone, I let it happen. Hey, I can't shield them from everything.

"Oh no!" Marcy yelled. "She's dead!"

"Does that mean we get to loot her?" Lulu asked.

"She's not dead," I said. "But she will be if one of you doesn't heal her."

When Hilary's cleric went for the heal, I attacked her, too. I was addicted!

The next two attacks on my minions resulted in success. Now they just had to face off with the wicked slingers.

They knocked off Khloe and got lucky when I rolled low for Kim and Kourtney.

LaFawnda was upright again and cast *thunderwave*. That, coupled with Kayan's *astral condemnation*, basically handed Kourtney's heels to her. Only one slinger remained!

"She's bloodied but still has a little left in her."

Just thinking about their target made my skin crawl, but I was sad to see this encounter almost over.

On what was presumably Kim's last turn, I made the most of it.

"Daggers and sling shots are so yesterday," she said to Ruby, who was standing besides the pit. "Kim rams a stiletto heel into your armored belly and shoves you down the hole."

"That's allowed?" Hilary asked.

"Yep," I said, realizing I had no idea how to calculate an attack or damage for this, so I did what any good DM would do—I made up a number and rolled my d20.

"Sorry, Ruby," I said. "Down you go."

"Does falling into a hole cause damage?" Lulu asked. "Because I only have 2 hit points left."

"It does," I told her, but I wasn't worried. Lulu's paladin getting kicked into a pit by a reality star's Jimmy Choo was going to be one of those moments you take away from the game and talk about the rest of the week until it's time to play again. Besides, it's probably a terrible idea to kill your boss's character.

"You notice a rope as you're falling," I told her. "Give me an Athletics check."

The girls issued encouraging words to her as she picked up her d20. "Come on, Lulu! You got this!"

"I have no upper body strength. I'm weak!"

"This isn't you," I reminded her. "It's the fantasy you."

She rolled a nineteen.

"You grab that rope with one hand and pull yourself up with the same ease as someone pulling the tinfoil lid off a container of yogurt. You even do a triple back handspring for good measure when you land. Kim passes out from fear and surprise."

They cheered!

Marcy's next attack finished off Kim, even without a buff from me.

Our game lasted 45 minutes longer than scheduled. As they packed up their cheese tray and paper plates and cocktail napkins, they discussed important game information, like who was bringing the snacks next week. I guess that meant we'd be doing this again.

"Thanks, Shelly," Lulu said. "I told you you'd do great."

As they walked back to their desks, I heard them recap how Lulu fell into the pit and how LaFawnda was almost slain by a flaming sack of poo. It might not be Marty's D&D, but who cares? They played it, they got it, and most importantly, they liked it.

I walked back to my desk with my *Dungeon Tiles*, rulebooks, and miniatures, feeling rather accomplished. I swear other DMs I passed in the hall gave me a smile and a nod, like they knew I had just finished a successful game. Maybe they really do have a secret club? I stopped by New DM's desk to give him back his minis.

"Did you kill them?" he asked.

"So close, New DM. So close."

"Good job."

"Good teacher."

I couldn't wait to get home and watch E! News. I had another encounter to plan.

About the Author

Shelly Mazzanoble is sorry for beating up on the Kardashians and would like to issue an open invitation to any family members who want to play D&D. Except Bruce Jenner. Sorry, buddy.

Ooh Shiny: Web Upgrade

BY CHRIS TULACH

illustrations by Eric L. Williams

As many of you reading this already know, the D&D website recently has been cleaned up and given an upgrade. Not only did this affect the main pages of the site, but all of the Organized Play pages have also been retooled to fit the new model as well. This month, we'll talk about the changes on our little corner of the site, under the new "Events" tab.

D&D Events Site Design

The new site is designed much differently from the old one. Instead of providing all sorts of information to target all levels of users, such as newbie welcoming pages and very specific campaign news for experienced veterans, the site now focuses on giving basic information for the visitor to easily understand. You can think of it as the "elevator pitch" for our D&D Events—what we would say about our programs if we only had a minute or two to explain them to a new visitor. From there, the user can "drill down" into specifics by visiting the Wizards Community pages devoted to our programs, which are being maintained by both Wizards staff and the community at-large.

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RPGA Called D&D Events

On the new site, our D&D Organized Play area is called "D&D Events" rather than "RPGA." For someone new to our site and our programs, the word "RPGA" doesn't have much meaning to them—heck, it means "Roleplaying Gamers Association," which in and of itself is a bit outdated. Certainly, veterans know what the RPGA is and use the term to mean "Wizards' official D&D Organized Play." But that doesn't help someone new, so we've updated the site to call the pages "D&D Events," which is much clearer to a visitor that doesn't associate the RPGA with Wizards of the Coast.

On a broader scale, the Wizards Play Network (or WPN) is our umbrella where all of our game play programs reside. Whether it's Friday Night Magic or Living Forgotten Realms, all of those programs are a part of the WPN. An organizer schedules games and interacts with us through the WPN, and while players often identify themselves as a part of the DCI or RPGA, that's all a part of the Wizards Play Network. You'll see us use the WPN more and more as the organizational term to mean "official Wizards play."

A Quick Tour

I'd like to take you on a spin around the D&D Events site. While I won't cover everything you'll find on the Events page, I hope to give folks that have grown used to the old site a primer on where things are on the new one.

First, head to the D&D main website. You'll see a clean, well-designed welcome page that has a number of headers at the top of the page. Click on the "Events" header, which will take you over to our home.

From there, you'll see a nice big piece of art and some text welcoming you to the Events page. Below that, you'll see a number of programs all partitioned off in their own little frames—as of this writing, there are four of these—Living Forgotten Realms, Worldwide D&D Game Days, DM Rewards, and D&D Conventions. Clicking on any of these (you can click on the art, the title, or "Learn More") will take you to the program's welcome page; more on that in a minute.

On the right-hand navigation, toward the top, you'll see a header that's called "Event Links." There, you'll find links to all the programs I just mentioned as well as other important stuff. "Find a Group" takes you to the WIZARDS Community site where you can search for any sort of community group that exists over there, including stores, play locations, and D&D-themed groups like the official Dungeons & Dragons group and the official Living Forgotten Realms group. "Join the WPN" takes you to the signup page for the Wizards Play Network where new organizers can join our organizer support system and receive kits for various play programs. "Event Downloads" brings you to our D&D Events file repository, where stuff like character creation guides for our various D&D play programs can be downloaded. Lastly, "Schedule an Event" is where you'll go if you want to order one of the many D&D adventures available through us for play at home, at a store, or anywhere else you want to host your game. You'll need to have your RPGA/DCI number and password handy to access the ordering system.

You'll see a number of other boxes on the right side, most of which are pretty straightforward. However, I want to call particular attention to the Store and Event Locator, which is a great tool for you to find a store that carries our games or get info on where you might find an upcoming event, including any D&D games scheduled for public play, like Worldwide D&D Game Day or Living Forgotten Realms. Also of note is another call-out for the Wizards Play Network here as well.

I want to jump back to what I mentioned a little earlier to explain how content is housed on the new Wizards site for the various programs. There are those big program frames just below the welcome message and graphic for the page; when you click on one of them, you'll get the essentials on what the program's about. In most instances, you'll find a header at the bottom of this short text that says "Tell Me More!" You'll then be taken to the specific program's group page on the Wizards Community site for all other information. From the program's group page there, you can find blog posts, polls, a wiki updated with current program information, discussion forums, and all sorts of other specifics for folks who are interested in the play program. Our community group pages will now house almost all of the real content for our programs, which gives us much more two-way communication with you, because you can comment directly on information posted and contribute to the ever-expanding trove of information available on each group page.

Hopefully, this little tour gave you some information on what's where and also some of the design decisions that went into creating the new D&D Events pages. But before I bid you good gaming this month, I would like to give you a friendly reminder about our next big event!

Weekend in the Realms is Almost Here!

Don't forget, this year's Weekend in the Realms is just around the corner. Taking place November 6–8 at a public location near you (use the Event Locator to find one), this event offers the opportunity to play an exclusive Living Forgotten Realms adventure called "The

Icy Queen's Crossing." Bring your existing 1st-4th level LFR character, create a new 1st-level one, or use one of the pre-generated ones provided at the event and have a great time adventuring in the Narfell! Make the weekend special—bring a new-to-LFR friend with you and ask your organizer to schedule some other LFR games with the adventure, including the new mini-campaign "Embers of Dawn"! Head to the Living Forgotten Realms community group for more information!

Until next month, have a howling good time as you fight off the horrors that await in the dark corridors of your games. Happy Halloween!

New Living Forgotten Realms Adventures Releasing This Month

Check out the latest adventure offerings for October!

October 7, 2009

DRAG1-6 *Night of Fallen Petals*

The Night of Fallen Petals is nigh, a festival to celebrate the dead and pay honor to those who have long since passed. But not all secrets stay dead, and the prophecy of a returning God-King may be a means for dark forces to upset the power balance in Nathlek city. A Living Forgotten Realms adventure set in Nathlan on the Dragon Coast, for characters levels 7–10. Final part of the White Petal Demise major quest.

WATE1-6 *Out of Hatred*

His thirst for vengeance not yet satiated, the Necromancer strikes at Waterdeep once again. Will heroes step forward to end this menace? This adventure concludes the major quest "Quest for the Necromancer," and follows the story begun in WATE1-3 and continued in WATE1-4. A Living Forgotten Realms adventure set in Waterdeep for characters levels 11–14.

October 14, 2009

AGLA1-6 *Twisted Roots Run Deep*

In Old Velprintalar, where those neglected and forgotten by society live and die in squalor, power can be had by a strong arm, a few coins, or powerful influence. Cutthroats, thugs, and thieves thrive here—but to what purpose? Plans once thought put to rest now have new life. A Living Forgotten Realms adventure set in Aglarond for characters levels 11–14. This adventure is a sequel to AGLA1-3 The Worst of All Snares, though play of the prior adventure is not required.

MINI1-3 *Building the Pyre*

Adventurers have gained a clue that the cult activities in Sambral are directed by superiors in Ramekho. The best chance of defeating the cultists is to find them before they notice anyone looking for them. A double-length Living Forgotten Realms adventure set in Ramekho for characters levels1–4. It is recommended that you play the *Embers of Dawn* mini-campaign adventures in sequential order with one character for the best enjoyment and play possibilities within the mini-campaign, but it is not required.

October 21, 2009

DALE1-6 The *Vesperin Initiative*

A trade consortium is being formed. All the players have been selected. Now if they could just agree to meet and finalize the trade pact. Why can't they all just get along? A Living Forgotten Realms adventure set in the Dalelands for characters levels 11–14.

LURU1-6 *Desperate Times*

Traveling the Nether Mountains has always been risky with bandits and shades looking for loot. Now it seems the undead are involved as more caravans go missing. A Living Forgotten Realms adventure set in Luruar for characters levels 4–7.

October 28, 2009

CORE1-15 *Where Dragons Die*

Netheril's influence is expanding alarmingly and the Silverstars of Selûne are becoming desperate. The task of finding a weapon suitable for battling this expansion has fallen to you and your only clues take you to a place where mortals dare not tread. A Living Forgotten Realms adventure set near Netheril for characters levels 11–14. The third part of the Bane of Shadows trilogy.

CORM1-6 *Curse of the Queen of Thorns*

Heralds of an ancient curse arise and lay waste to the glorious nation of Cormyr. Only the greatest of heroes can stop the Harbingers of the Queen of Thorns. This is the beginning of a major quest. A Living Forgotten Realms adventure set in Cormyr for characters levels 11–14.

About the Author

Originally thought to have been raised from a humble Midwestern family, **Chris Tulach** actually fell to Earth in a meteorite-shaped capsule flung from a planet far outside our galaxy. While under the yellow rays of Sol, Chris's nerdity far surpasses that of any normal human. Using this precious gift only for good, he has become the D&D® Organized Play Content Developer, responsible for the development and deployment of Dungeons & Dragons organized play programs. He is also the co-author of *E2 Kingdom of the Ghouls*™.

This month, I want to talk about how we're putting a number of big ideas into small, compact, and affordable packages. In the digital arena, we're about to increase the frequency of content by moving to a daily release schedule for Dragon and Dungeon Magazine articles. In the analog world, next year will see the release of a series of small products targeted at specific topics and specific parts of the D&D audience. Let's start with what's coming up for Insiders via the digital magazines.

Big Things in Small Packages

BY BILL SLAVICSEK

Dragon Magazine

November is the first month we'll be rolling out content five days a week (as mentioned in Chris Young's newest editorial). One of the articles in November that we're most excited about is Rodney Thompson's new artificer build. It's the only arcane class currently lacking a third build, and we're proud to roll it out on *D&D Insider*. December follows right on the heels of that article with a follow-up to the release of the assassin, detailing new feats, powers, and ki focus items to expand the options for assassin characters. We're also continuing to explore new ways to expand the rules. In December, we'll feature an article with familiar powers—wizard powers with extra effects if you have a familiar. And in January, we'll be giving warlocks more roleplaying and power options with an article describing what it means to make a pact with a warlock patron.

All this and more is ahead in *Dragon* magazine, with smaller, more focused articles appearing five times a week. This way, we'll be sure to hit you with something you can use, regardless of the class or race you're playing, sometime over the course of each month.

Dungeon Magazine

We're doing the same thing on the *Dungeon* side of *D&D Insider*, presenting more short adventures, more concise dungeon delve-style content, and even some solo adventures for you to try out between game sessions with your group. The new Chaos Scar project continues, as well as Scales of War, and along the way you'll see great Dungeon Master support features (such as a new Demonomicon and the "Ecology of the Mithral Dragon"), and more short adventures more frequently.

New Product Format

When it comes to physical D&D products, the new year introduces a new format designed to provide targeted content at a great price. For players, we introduce the races books. These 32-page softcovers give players more story, more options, and more powerups for the races they're playing, with material applicable to all classes and roles in the game. January sees the release of Dragonborn, followed by Tieflings in June. I'm giving you a peek at the Dragonborn below.

For DMs, we're providing locations in this format—32 pages with a poster map. These products give a DM

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a ready-to-use location to drop into any campaign setting. The first of these, Hammerfast, appears in March. It details the people, places, and events happening in and around this dwarven outpost. In July, look for Vor Rukoth, an ancient ruins that can serve as the basis for countless adventures in any campaign. Now, here's a preview of *Player's Handbook Races: Dragonborn*.

DRAGONBORN

Glory

Winning glory is a driving motivation for many dragonborn adventurers, as well as dragonborn in other walks of life. The dragonborn caravan guard seeks to earn fame by driving off bandits, the dragonborn artisan hopes to gain renown by creating goods known far and wide for their quality and artistry, and the dragonborn adventurer hopes to win glory by slaying terrible monsters, acquiring great treasures, and fighting back the darkness that threatens to swallow the last remnants of civilization.

Some have compared this hunger for glory to a dragon's magnificent ego, and the comparison seems apt. Just as a dragon wants to be known for the size of its hoard and feared for the strength of its breath and claws, so a dragonborn seeks renown or perhaps even notoriety. If there is a difference, however, it lies in the dragonborn's sense of being a representative of a larger group of people.

For most dragonborn, the desire for glory goes beyond a lust for individual renown and recognition. Dragonborn seek glory not just for themselves, but for their clans and their race as a whole. When a dragonborn does glorious things, that individual's clan and indeed the race as a whole wins glory, rising in the esteem of other clans and the other races of the world.

So few dragonborn survive in the world, and they are so scattered, that any given dragonborn might well be the only member of the race known to some number of people. Those people naturally form their opinion of dragonborn in general based on their knowledge of the individual. If a dragonborn does glorious deeds, the people who see them or learn of them attribute that glory to the race as a whole. In this way, dragonborn hope, they can continue to live up to the all-but-forgotten glories of ancient Arkhosia.

That said, some dragonborn are prone to the same egotistical pride that dragons display, and adventurers are perhaps the most susceptible to it. They seek glory, not to elevate the stature of their race, but to command the respect and adulation of others, to amass their own hoards of wealth, perhaps even to strike terror into the hearts of others. Dragonborn who follow Tiamat's path often pair this vainglory with a jealous pride that leads them to sabotage the efforts and accomplishments of those they view as rivals. But even those who claim to follow Bahamut's path sometimes strive to be seen as paragons of justice and honor, their pride blinding them to their own shortcomings. They protect the weak, not because that is what Bahamut commands, but because they desire the praise of those they have saved, and perhaps seek a monetary reward.

PARAGON PATH: NINEFOLD MASTER

"I have mastered a study of magic that was ancient when your kind were barbarians at our feet."

Prerequisite: Dragonborn, any arcane class, Draconic Spellcaster.

In ancient Arkhosia, arcane spellcasters studied the Ninefold Path, a way toward both arcane mastery and spiritual awakening. The steps along the path represent an increasing attunement to the draconic energies in the initiate's being, a practice that unites the study of magic with the innate characteristics of the dragonborn race.

You are a master of the Ninefold Path, on your way toward arcane perfection as the scholars of Arkhosia understood it. Your dragon breath is another spell in your arsenal, and when you use spells that create the same elemental force as your breath, you demonstrate mastery over the magic that powers them.

Ninefold Master Path Features

Breath Expertise (11th level): Your dragon breath power is considered an arcane power belonging to each of your arcane classes. If you are wielding an implement you can use for your arcane powers, you may add the implement's enhancement bonus to the damage rolls for your dragon breath power.

Dragon Breath Action (11th level): When you spend an action point to take an extra action, you can

also use your dragon breath as a free action, even if you have already expended it in this encounter.

Draconic Resistance (16th level): Choose one damage type you can deal with your dragon breath power. You gain resistance to that damage type equal to 5 + one-half your level.

Dragon Aura Ninefold Master Attack 11

The innate energy of your draconic breath forms a shield around you, pushing your enemies away.

Encounter ✦ Arcane, Implement, Zone; Varies
Standard Action **Close** burst 1
Target: Each creature in blast
Attack: Intelligence or Charisma vs. Fortitude
Hit: 3d6 + Intelligence or Charisma modifier damage, and push the target 1 square. The damage is the same type as any type you can deal with your dragon breath.

Countering Breath Ninefold Master Utility 12

As your foe unleashes a blast of elemental power, you release your own, subtly altering your draconic breath to negate your enemy's attack.

Encounter ✦ Arcane
Immediate Interrupt **Close** blast 3
Trigger: An enemy targets you with a close or area attack that deals a damage type you can deal with dragon breath
Effect: Your space and the blast are not considered part of the triggering attack's area of effect.

Dragon Storm Ninefold Master Attack 20

Your exhalation of elemental energy transforms into a swirling vortex of power.

Daily ✦ Arcane, Implement, Zone; Varies
Standard Action **Close** blast 5
Target: Each creature in blast
Attack: Intelligence or Charisma vs. Reflex
Hit: 3d8 + Intelligence or Charisma modifier damage. The damage is the same type as any type you can deal with your dragon breath.
Effect: The blast becomes a zone that lasts until the end of your next turn. A creature that enters or starts its turn in the zone takes 10 damage of the same type as the initial attack's damage. As a move action, you can move the zone 3 squares.
Sustain Minor: The zone persists.

On the other hand, we've also got a bunch of big things in big packages slated for release next year, but I think I'll save that to talk about next month. Until then ...

Keep Playing!

THE HATCHLANDS

For paragon tier and epic tier characters

The Hatchlands loop through the lowest reaches of the Underdark like an endless ulcerated intestine. According to drow legend, the network of pocked, unstable passageways came into congruence with the Far Realm long ago, ever so briefly. That tiny contact warped lifeless matter and flesh alike. Beholders were the abominable result.

Legend of the Great Hatching

Before the height of the empire of Nihilath came the Great Hatching. During this apocalyptic event, the lower depths of the Underdark shuddered and burbled. Vents appeared in its unstable rock, each of them a festering wound in the fabric of reality. The Great Mother, progenitor of the beholders, was born beneath the earth, called into life by the unfiltered, maddening illumination of the Far Realm. She tore herself from an egg that was her first worldly form. The pieces of the Great Mother's shattered shell dispersed throughout the Underdark.

Each shell piece attempted to recall its earlier shape. Most managed to become again what all had once been part of: an egg. However, each piece contained only a fraction of the vigor the original egg possessed. Still, when these lesser eggs hatched, beholders slipped forth from their slimy ruins.

The first beholders were paragons of insanity. They immediately fell into a murderous struggle for supremacy. Most died, though a few proved capable of a hint of self-preservation. These fled the hatching slaughter. They swept through the Underdark, claiming lofty chambers and secure redoubts for themselves.

Alternate Theories of the Hatching

As unyieldingly solitary beings, beholders can't be said to have a culture or a set of common myths. They do seem to be born with a flicker of collective memory about the Great Hatching. The story given here is the most commonly told, both by beholders themselves and by surface world scholars. However,

beholders are notorious theorizers. If prompted, they might be tempted to spout alternate versions of the story. Examples reported by adventures surviving beholder captivity include:

✦ The apocalyptic event that resulted in the Great Hatching was Torog's maddened crawl through the Underdark.

✦ Beholder eggs condensed from the bodily effluvia of Torog, the crawling god.

✦ The Great Mother was summoned by the primordials to destroy Torog, their hated foe.

✦ The Great Mother does not literally exist. She is a personification by foolish early beholders of the Hatchlands' eggs, which itself was an anomalous but entirely natural phenomenon.

✦ The original beholder egg was accidentally created by illithids. When beholders formed from it, they destroyed the illithids. (To accept this story, one must believe the beholders' claim that they caused the downfall of the empire of Nihilath.)

The Hatchlands Today

Lonely, dank, and suffused with an acrid stink of elemental wrongness, the Hatchlands are now home to a few weak beholders. Occasionally, in an aftereffect of the Great Mother's birth, a fragment of her shell condenses into a new pulsing egg.

If threatened, the egg immediately hatches, birth¬ing a completely grown, fully intelligent beholder. Left to its own devices, it develops for a longer period, until it hatches as a higher-level beholder.

The Impulse

No single beholder dares to claim the Hatchlands as its exclusive domain. At rare times, the beholders of the Underdark feel a sick, uneasy feeling deep in their globular bellies. After a period of nauseated confusion, they identify this effect as a call to fellowship from the Great Mother. If they permit themselves to speak of it at all, they ashamedly call this feeling "the impulse." It compels them to abandon their comfortable state of mutual hostility to come together toward a common purpose.

The Hatchlands serves as neutral ground for beholders. Within its confines, they can restrain their instinctive desire to violently establish dominance over all other creatures. Here, they can achieve this feat without the impulse, though they seldom see a reason to do so.

Upon arrival in the Hatchlands, the strongest beholder senses the wishes of the Great Mother. It uses its genius intellect to create a plan to carry out those desires. It then lays out these instructions to the others as they arrive. Vexed by each other's company, the beholders leave as quickly as possible, fanning out to perform their separate roles in the scheme.

Martial Practices

Beyond the exploits for which they're famed, martial adventurers can push the bounds of what is possible for ordinary mortals by mastering challenging techniques called martial practices. Using these rare methods, an adventurer can run for days, swim to great depths, and even create magic items. Although martial practices approach what's possible with rituals, they exist wholly in the realm of martial power.

A martial practice is similar to a ritual. To learn martial practices, you must first have the Practiced Study feat. To use a martial practice, you must then acquire a practice, master it, and perform it. A practice you master must be associated with a skill in which you are trained. The component costs sometimes include healing surges. After you finish performing a practice, you gain its benefit.

Practiced Study

Prerequisite: Any martial class
Benefit: You can master and perform martial practices. You learn one martial practice of your level or lower.

Acquiring Martial Practices

You can learn the rudiments of martial practices from a master or purchase them on the open market. Unless you find the practice as part of treasure, you'll pay something for it.

Learn through Training: Any character who has mastered a martial practice can teach it to you. The instructor can be another player character or an NPC you meet. Training is costly and arduous. Usually, you pay the cost in coins or other treasure. Learning a martial practice costs half the market price if you learn it from another player character. You should assume that you are paying for the supplies needed for training, not for your ally's work and time.

Purchase: If you can find a merchant that deals in rare goods, you can pay the market price of a martial practice to acquire it.

Find in Treasure: You might also find martial practices in the form of ancient manuals hidden away in dusty libraries or haunted castles. Practices contained within these texts offer detailed instructions so that with careful study you can master them. The Dungeon Master deducts the market price of a martial practice you find from treasure you earn.

Mastering Martial Practices

You must master a martial practice before you are able to perform it. To master a practice, you must:

✦ Acquire the martial practice

✦ Have the Practiced Study feat

✦ Meet or exceed the practice's level requirement

✦ Be trained in at least one of the key skills for the practice

✦ Study the martial practice for a total of 8 hours

The studying process differs depending on how you acquired the martial practice. If you acquired it through training, the study period takes place at the same time as acquiring the practice. If you bought or found the practice, the time is spent closely studying the manual and repeating the lessons and steps within the text.

Performing a Martial Practice

The steps to perform a martial practice correspond to the headers of the practice's description. The martial practices don't include action types in their descriptions, but you can infer what type of actions you might take to perform the activities that benefit from the practice.

Time: Martial practices take time to perform. You might have to adopt the right physical and mental state, sweat over a forge to craft an item, or painstakingly camouflage your party's campsite.

Component Costs: Martial practices are strenuous. Unlike rituals, which require only a material component cost, most martial practices require an expenditure of healing surges. This cost reflects the strain on your body and mind.

A few martial practices also require materials to properly perform them. When a practice has a component cost, you must pay the price from your store of treasure, whether you're spending coins, gems, or other valuables. The component cost represents the price of equipment, bribes, and raw materials. You pay the component cost, including both treasure and healing surges, when you complete the practice. If you cannot pay the full cost, the practice has no effect.

Skills: Each practice lists one or more key skills, and you must be trained in at least one of these skills to perform the practice. Some practices also require skill checks to determine your effort's effectiveness. Usually, the practice succeeds regardless of the check result and high results produce the best effects. Unless a practice says otherwise, you make your skill check at the end of its performance. As with rituals, you cannot take 10 on this check.

Effects of a Martial Practice

After you finish performing a practice, you gain its benefit for the practice's duration. Sometimes it's instantaneous: You've learned the information or completed the task. Other times, you gain a benefit for a set amount of time, or you create a permanent object.

Assistance

Typically you must perform the martial practice without help. Any exceptions are noted in a practice's description.

Interrupting a Martial Practice

You can stop performing a martial practice at any point before it's completed without expending any healing surges or component costs. Once you stop, you cannot resume the practice; you must start over again.

Alter Ego

With a little makeup and a bit of misdirection, you can be anyone.

Level: 8 **Component Cost:** 1 healing surge and 50 gp
Time: 1 hour **Market Price:** 275 gp
Duration: 24 hours **Key Skill:** Bluff

You alter your own appearance or the appearance of an ally who is present throughout your performance of the practice. The disguise can alter facial and physical features and appear to modify height and weight by up to 10%. You can also use this martial practice to disguise gender, race, and age.

Make a Bluff check with a +5 bonus. Your result determines the Insight check a creature must make to determine that the person you disguised is not who he or she appears to be.

You can use this practice to impersonate another humanoid. When you interact with a creature that is familiar with the person you're imitating, that creature gains a +10 bonus to its Insight check.

Precise Forgery

Your falsified papers are resistant to even the closest scrutiny.

Level: 5 **Component Cost:** 1 healing surge
Time: 10 minutes **Market Price:** 80 gp
Duration: Permanent **Key Skill:** Thievery

You fabricate papers or documents so you can foist them off as being authentic. You can create forgeries of any kind, including written orders, treasure maps, paintings, manifests, and land grants. Forging a simple document requires 10 minutes. More complex works take as long as the Dungeon Master decides.

At the end of the practice, make a Thievery check. Your check result determines the forgery's quality. Anyone examining the document must succeed at a Perception check equal to your Thievery check to discern the falsehood. You might have to engage in a skill challenge to convince another creature that the document is authentic if the forgery contradicts other documents or orders.

Speech without Words

No language barrier can keep you from communicating.

Level: 3 Component Cost: 1 healing surge
Time: 5 minutes **Market Price:** 50 gp
Duration: 10 minutes **Key Skill:** Diplomacy (no check)

Through pantomime, you communicate with a nonhostile creature you can see, even if it does not speak your language. The creature must have an Intelligence score higher than 3. You can communicate simple ideas and concepts, such as figuring out where a monster went, where one might find fresh water, if there's a safe place to camp, and so on. Conveying complex ideas might require a skill challenge, at the Dungeon Master's discretion.

In Case You Don't Know Him

Bill Slavicsek's gaming life was forever changed when he discovered **Dungeons & Dragons**® in 1976. He became a gaming professional in 1986 when he was hired by West End Games as an editor. He quickly added developer, designer, and creative manager to his resume, and his work helped shape the *Paranoia*, *Ghostbusters*, *Star Wars*, and *Torg* roleplaying games. He even found some time during that period to do freelance work for **D&D** 1st Edition. In 1993, Bill joined the staff of TSR, Inc. as a designer/editor. He worked on a bunch of 2nd Edition material, including products for core **D&D**, *Dark Sun*®, *Ravenloft*®, and *Planescape*®. In 1997, he was part of the TSR crowd that moved to Seattle to join Wizards of the Coast, and in that year he was promoted to R&D Director for **D&D**. In that position, Bill oversaw the creation of both the 3rd Edition and 4th Edition of the **D&D Roleplaying Game**. He was one of the driving forces behind the **D&D Insider** project, and he continues to oversee and lead the creative strategy and effort for **Dungeons & Dragons**.

Bill's enormous list of credits includes *Alternity*®, *d20 Modern*®, *d20 Star Wars*®, *Pokemon Jr.*, *Eberron*® *Campaign Setting*, the *D&D For Dummies* books, and his monthly *Ampersand* (&) column for *Dragon*® Magazine.